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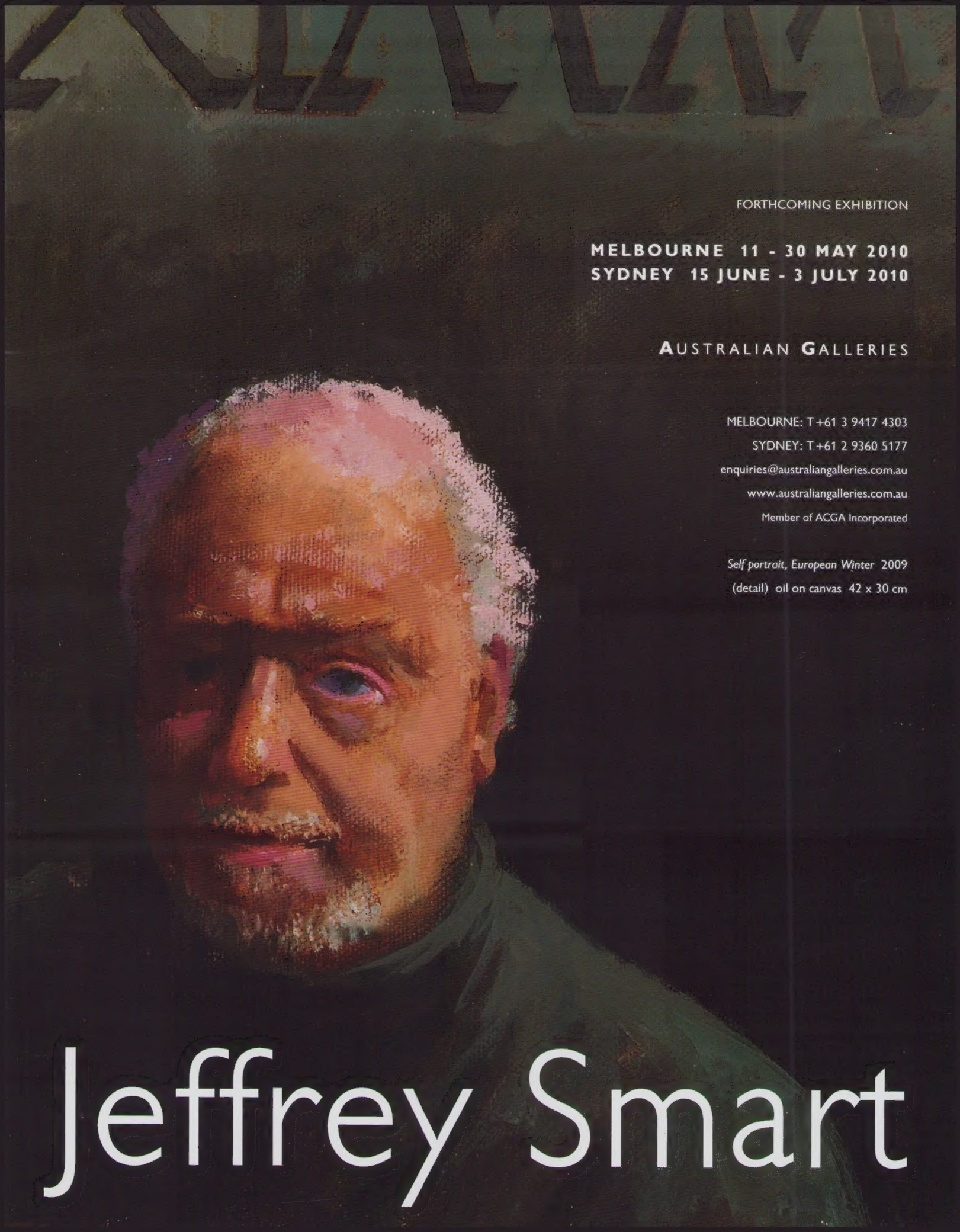

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Cover One page from *Picture book: Selected insects*, 1788. Illustrated *kyōka* anthology, 2 volumes, colour woodblock with slight mica. Image courtesy of the Asian Art Museum, National Museums in Berlin, photography by Jürgen Liepe.

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ART GALLERY SOCIETY NSW

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LOOK *out*

Are you one of the lucky people?

An article about Justin O'Brien in November *Look* ended with a note that if the reader was one of the lucky people who owned a work by this artist, and was happy to lend it, he or she might like to contact the Gallery's Australian art department where a retrospective is being prepared for the end of this year. From the day the magazines were delivered, the exhibition's co-curator, Natalie Wilson, was getting phone calls that began "I am one of the lucky people who own a Justin O'Brien painting..."

Within a month, she had a file of nearly 30 works – some of them paintings that had disappeared without trace from sales made long ago, and which she and her fellow curator Barry Pearce had earmarked as possibilities for the show without much confidence in actually finding them. They are delighted and offer many thanks to all who called – as well as a request for anyone who might still be thinking about it ... to get in touch on nataliew@ag.nsw.gov.au or phone on 9225 1603. There is still time.

Natalie also reports that she and Barry will be in Italy this month to do some research for the exhibition and to follow one of Justin O'Brien's famous 'art walks' through the streets of Rome – to take in the churches and sights which were so inspirational to him, and document their journey through photographs and film. We look forward to hearing about their adventures in a future article for *Look*.

Nick Waterlow

The tragic death of Nick Waterlow suddenly robbed the art world of a respected and much liked figure in an area of activity where the combination is rare. As a journalist who made contact with him most often during his Biennale of Sydney years – 1979, 1986 and 1988 – your editor was always grateful for his ability to explain the inexplicable and his patience in doing so.

He had been director of the UNSW's Ivan Dougherty Gallery at the College of Fine Arts since 1991. John McDonald, art critic of *The Sydney Morning Herald*, wrote about his diplomacy, his eclectic tastes in art and his ability to listen to others: "In an art world full of puffed-up egos, there is a need for people such as Waterlow, who could work his way through any minefield and come up with a brilliant result. He has been an integral part of the Sydney art scene for more than 30 years and will be deeply, sorely missed."

1 warehouse + 400 artworks x 6 days of viewing and selection = Artexpress

Bear this little equation in mind when you visit this year's exhibition – it might give you an idea of just how much work goes on behind the scenes. Somebody who knows this well is Leeanne Carr, the AGNSW coordinator of secondary education programs and curator of this year's exhibition. Having co-curated the 2008 exhibition and assisted on three previous occasions, Leeanne felt a great sense of responsibility: "This is an important exhibition because the students are very personally linked to these works, they work on them for so long that you can almost see pieces of personality come through in their art ... I felt I had to respect every single artwork before making my decision." Though, she admits, she could not have done it without the help of Victoria Collings, the new AGNSW senior coordinator of education programs (who you can read about in Last Word, page 46) and Amanda Peacock, coordinator of Aboriginal education programs, who assisted her in the selection.

The Gallery is the premier venue for Artexpress, exhibiting 45 works, and, as such, is entitled to first choice in the selection process: "We are very lucky to have such a large space at our disposal," explains Leeanne, "because it allows us to exhibit whole bodies of work, which is key to making this exhibition a real learning and teaching tool." The other venues of the 2010 exhibition are Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney Olympic Park and – for the first time this year – The Rocks, replacing the Market Street windows of David Jones. "I'm very impressed by the level of sophistication of the bodies of work in this year's exhibition," Leeanne told us, "they show a remarkable degree of resolution and coherence, confirming the students' competence and creativity".

Artexpress runs at the Gallery from February 18 to May 9. The exhibition will travel to regional NSW, with dates in Albury, Wollongong, Newcastle, Tamworth, Griffith and Taree/Manning. You can find more information on the Inside Artexpress website www.insideartexpress.com.au.

Above: **Jane Bennett** *Fitzroy Dock, Cockatoo Island* 2006, oil on canvas, 75 x 100 cm, © the artist.

Welcome to 2010 – already this 21st century is into double figures! February is the month that *Art and Australia* begins, taking the Society's art appreciation lecture series in a new direction. The subtitle – *European preludes and parallels* – gives an idea of the ground it will cover over two years. To start with, we explore European ideas of a part of the globe they had not yet seen – and which they imagined with some quite astounding visions.

Then, with the customary excellence of our lecturers, we will examine art on this continent from the indigenous people to those who travelled with Captain Cook and Baudin, from early landscape painting and portraiture in Australia to photography and the influence of Velasquez. It is going to be a riveting series – as you already appreciate, judging by the heavy booking of the Thursday lectures. Wednesday is your best bet at this stage.

It is a delight to see how enthusiastic you are about hands-on art experiences. The demand for workshops covers all ages from five years up to seniors, and includes drawing in pencil and charcoal, collage, printmaking and sculpture. And that is just for this month.

March is the start of our *Resonate* series, with an exciting range of musicians performing in a diverse program. But before we get ahead of ourselves ... don't forget that *Rupert Bunny: artist in Paris* ends on February 21. Make sure you don't miss it – or maybe take the chance to see these charming and intriguing paintings again.

MICHAEL FENELEY

Guides leading the guides for 2010

Congratulations and thank you to Gwyneth Morgan for her year of coordinating the Society's volunteer guides – and welcome to Rosalie Blackshaw in the role for 2010. The other guides committee appointments for the year are Cathy Cameron as children's coordinator, Carolyn Bethwaite as lecture coordinator and Callie Guinness as secretary/treasurer. The Society thanks you all, past and present, for your hard work on our behalf.

Marine art

The waterways of Sydney, then and now is the title of an exhibition in the Fountain Court at NSW Parliament House, Macquarie Street, from February 3 to 25. It is presented by the Australian Society of Marine Artists and will be opened by Rear Admiral A.L. Hunt, president of the Australian Heritage Fleet. Admission is free.

Members of the Art Gallery Society are among those exhibiting, including Jane Bennett, whose work is shown here, Kay Cornell, Dean Claflin, John Sweaney – the organisation's Sydney events coordinator – and John Downton, who has published an amusing autobiography, *The (dirty) Big Red Book*, which he has donated to the Society's library.

Jane Bennett, who has been a finalist in the Wynne Prize many times and won the watercolour prize more than once, recalls her good fortune in being able to paint on Cockatoo Island in the mid 1980s, "when all of these rusting relics were still being used for ship building". She had to sign a copy of the official secrets act as she arrived each day, and promise not to sell any paintings of submarines to the Russians!

When she returned two decades later, she said it was like a ghost town, with dry docks full of water and half the cranes gone forever. Fitzroy Dock, built from 1851-57, still had one of the 1893 Priestman steam cranes, which can be seen on the right, in front of the entrance to the turbine hall that was once a cathedral of industry and is now a venue for arts and entertainment.

Paintings in the exhibition will focus on Sydney Harbour, Port Hacking, Broken Bay and the Sydney coastline. While the majority of the Society of Marine Artists members are painters in all mediums and styles, there are also lithographers, printmakers, sculptors, modelmakers and scrimshaw artists.

Vincent van Gogh writes

Publication by Thames and Hudson of all known letters from Vincent van Gogh in six volumes, the result of 15 years' work, was thrilling news – quickly followed by the sobering thought that it costs close to $1000 in Australia. BUT the entire book is also available free on the internet. Society member Jacob Grossbard was the first to alert us – many thanks – and you just have to click on www.vangoghletters.org to reach the guide to finding your way through the on-screen equivalent of more than 2000 pages with over 4300 illustrations. Good reading!

POETRY AND MEMORY

The lyrical art of Hossein Valamanesh

There is a lyrical quality to the art of Hossein Valamanesh, a rare ability to infuse simple forms and materials with sentiment and eloquence. Over the past three decades, the Iranian-born artist has developed a refined visual language, informed by a remarkable sensitivity for notions of memory, longing and connection to place. With artworks held in most national public collections, including the AGNSW, Valamanesh has been the subject of two major surveys, at the Art Gallery of South Australia in 2001 and Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art in 2002. *Middle Path*, a recent work by the artist, is now in the collection of the AGNSW, a purchase that confirms Valamanesh's standing as one of the most interesting contemporary Australian artists.

Born in Tehran in 1949 to Azerbaijani parents, Valamanesh graduated from the School of Fine Art, where priority was given to life-drawing and drawing from antiquity – in the tradition of the French Academy – alongside Persian literature, calligraphy and miniature painting. He moved to Australia in 1973 for romantic reasons and though the love affair did not last, he felt an affinity for the country, choosing to live in a tent for six months in the Western Australian countryside. In 1974, he was invited to visit Aboriginal communities of Central Australia with nine other artists and musicians, as part of a trans-cultural initiative. This was a significant experience for Valamanesh, who felt he could relate to the indigenous artists' use of natural, ephemeral materials and appreciate their cultural and spiritual concern with notions of personal history and place. The following year, Valamanesh moved to Adelaide and attended the South Australian School of Art, where he met his wife and fellow artist Angela Burdon, with whom he has since collaborated on a number of art projects – the couple works side-by-side in their shared studio to this day.

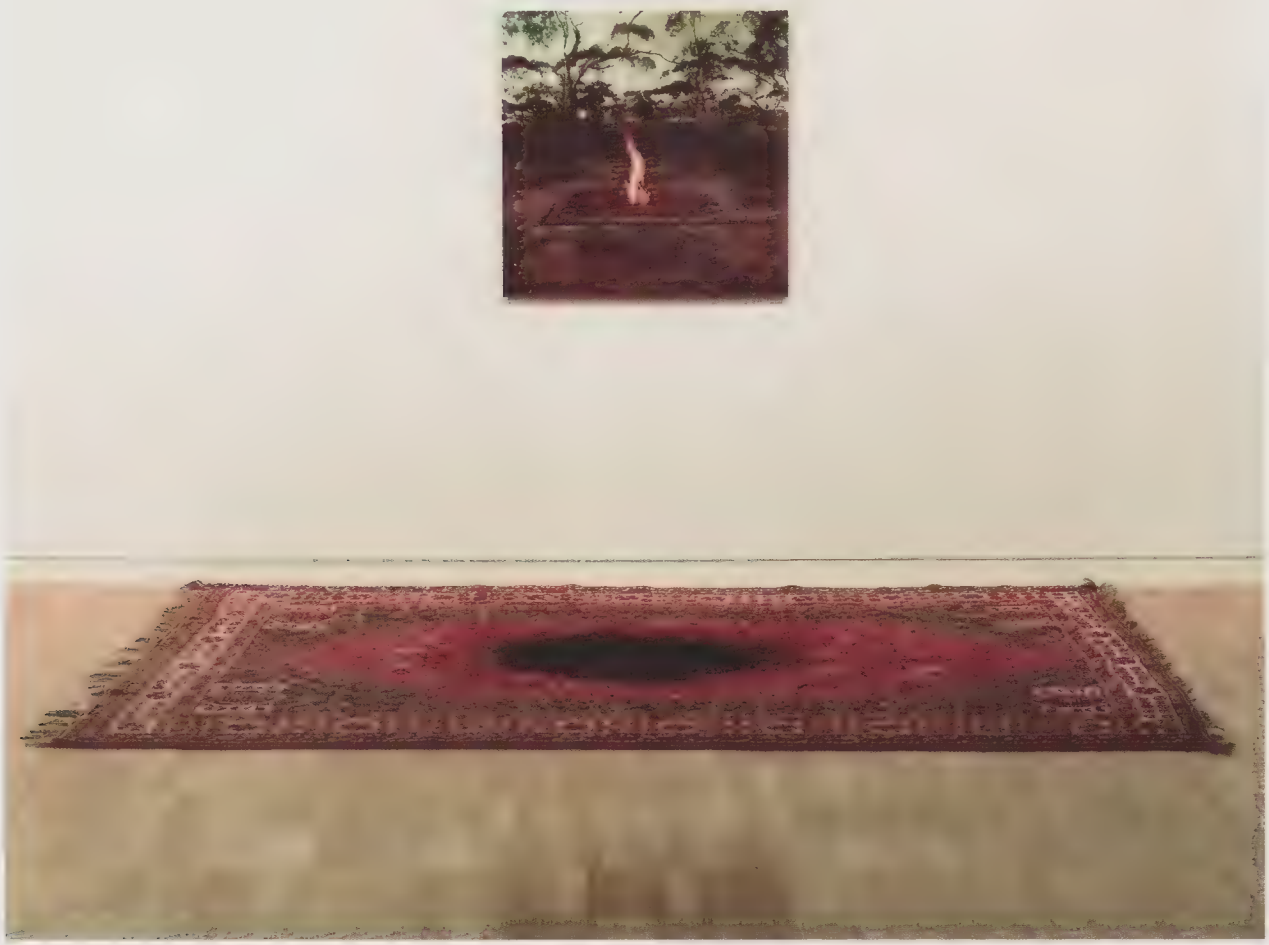
Purchased by the Gallery last October, *Middle Path* consists of a paper scroll, nearly eight metres long, on which the Farsi word for 'love', *eshg*, is handwritten in saffron, over and over again. As the text approaches the middle of the scroll, the writing recedes and fades, until only the faintest traces of the word remain, to gradually reappear and intensify again from there onwards. Arguably, Valamanesh's approach to Persian calligraphy is meaningful. In Sufi practice, the art of calligraphy is viewed as a deeply contemplative and spiritual activity. It relies on the carefully balanced rhythmic relationship between the signs and the empty spaces, between presence and void. A state of meditation and devotion is induced by writing the text, as it is by reading it. In this context, *Middle Path* might be taken to be an act of meditation on the nature of love, for both the artist and the viewer, as a ritual, perhaps even sacred, endeavour.

Though Valamanesh does not necessarily subscribe to the religious aspects of Sufism, the act of handwriting, in *Middle Path* as in other works, should not be explained in aesthetic terms alone. Similar themes and techniques, in fact, were explored by the artist in his 2006 work *Practice*, now in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia. Valamanesh made this statement, in relation to the work: "The process was twofold; the practice of contemplating the concept of love and the nuances of calligraphy. Saffron added extra flavour with its beautiful colour, connotations and aroma as I

was writing". The use of saffron is telling of Valamanesh's method, complying with the artist's predilection for natural materials. It could also be read as a visual metaphor for the artist's native culture and personal history, since Iran remains the world's largest producer of the precious spice. The work appears to evoke all the senses – the implied sensation of unfolding the scroll, the visual impact and cadence of the elegant writing, the taste and smell pertaining to the saffron – presenting us with a highly imaginative and poetic interpretation of the experience of love.

The lyricism conveyed by Valamanesh's work translates successfully to large-scale projects. The artist has completed a number of public commissions across Australia and overseas, including the sculptural environments *Knocking from the Inside* 1989, for Adelaide Station and Environs Redevelopment, and *Journey* 1991-93, at the Rookwood Necropolis in NSW. Sydney members might be more familiar with the Irish Famine Memorial monument at Hyde Park Barracks, also visible from Prince Albert Road, just around the corner from the Gallery. The monument is a collaboration between Valamanesh and his wife Angela and was commissioned by the Historic Houses Trust to commemorate the 'Irish orphans' – the thousands of young Irish women who were sent to Australia between 1848 and 1850, as an ill-devised solution to the desperate situation caused by the potato famine. The memorial creates a subtly inconsistent moment in the architecture of the Barracks: the southern sandstone wall is rotated on its axis

Above and previous page, *Middle Path* 2008 (detail). Saffron on paper 78 x 780 x 14 cm. AGNSW collection. © the artist. Photos by Jenni Carter. Below, **Angela and Hossein Valamanesh** *An Gorta Mór* 1999. Australian Monument to the Great Irish Famine, sculptural installation. Image courtesy of Historic Houses Trust, Hyde Park Barracks Museum.



Longing belonging 1997. Direct colour positive photograph 99 x 99 cm, carpet 305 x 216 cm. Contemporary Collection Benefactors 2002. AGNSW Collection. © the artist.

and intersected by a bronze cast table, with one end of the table protruding onto the street and the other within the courtyard of the building. On the street-end of the table sits a bowl without base – a simple but effective visual metaphor for the famine and the hopelessness of those who suffered from it. At the opposite end of the table, the bowl is replaced by a plate and spoon, representing the institutional response to the plight of the girls.

The artists' choice to suggest a sense of negated domesticity in this work is particularly insightful and moving. A large glass panel, bearing the names of some of the girls who were lodged in the building (more than 2,000 over three years), allows viewers to look through the wall and through time, as it were. In relation to this, the artists wrote: "The glass walls with finely sandblasted names of women gradually fading from one side to the other" – a device that returns in *Middle Path* as discussed – "indicates their large numbers, their country of origin and adds an ethereal quality or lightness. The faint and fading quality of the text on the glass panels also indicates the frail and inconstant nature of memory." Titled *An Gorta Mór* (Irish for 'the great hunger'), this is an understated, yet poignant tribute to the displaced lives of the 'orphans', which invites us to relate to the past not from a detached historical perspective, but through our emotions and imagination.

Notions of placement and displacement are once again explored through the use of visual metaphors in the work *Longing belonging*, also in the AGNSW collection. A photograph shows a Persian rug, with a fire burning at its centre, set in the Australian bush – an unusual and incongruously placed hearth. On the gallery floor is the rug itself, charred from the depicted burning. The visual parallel invokes a relationship of time and memory between cause and effect, past and present. Personal history appears to be central to the work. In a 1999 interview with curator and art writer Alison Carroll, Valamanesh explained his practice in these terms: "It is a personal investigation into a visual language based on memory, based on personal levels of experience – Aboriginal people and how they affected me; landscape and how it affects me; a personal search for why I am an artist and how it connects to life. I don't have answers." And it is, perhaps, in this ability to appeal to our senses and emotions – and beyond our intellect – that Valamanesh's greatest achievement can be found.

LAURA PIA

COLOUR, RHYTHM AND DESIGN

Wood and lino cuts from a time of great creative vitality

Thea Proctor *The rose*. Hand-coloured woodcut 22.2 x 21 cm. Purchased 1975. © AGNSW **Margaret Preston** *Mosman Bridge*. Hand-coloured woodcut 25.2 x 18.7 cm. Bequest of Margaret Preston via W.G. Preston 1986. © estate of Margaret Rose Preston.

A new exhibition brings bold design, colour and movement to the Australian Collection Focus Room next month – with a selection of wood and lino cuts. The display will feature works by a group of artists from the 1920s and '30s who shared a keen interest in colour, rhythm and design, and were excited at the capacity of these printing techniques to create modern images. Some 30 prints on themes of play and leisure, the city and still life, birds and landscape, highlight the vitality of Australian relief printmaking during this period.

Eleven artists are represented, among them the leading figures Margaret Preston, Thea Proctor, Adelaide Perry and Dorrit Black. Also included are Ethel Spowers, Evelyne Syme, Mabel Pye, Vera Blackburn, Gladys Gibbons, Murray Griffin and Ethleen Palmer, most of them little known beyond specialist circles of print enthusiasts and collectors.

In Europe, woodcuts have been made by artists since the time of Dürer in the 15th century. It was only in the late 19th century, however, that artists began to work more experimentally in this medium, to cut the woodblock themselves and produce small editions of prints intended to be hung on the wall. In Australia such experiments were intermittent and isolated until the 1920s, when there was a resurgence of activity, and with the adoption of the relatively new,

Dorrit Black *Watersprites* c.1931. Colour linocut 18.6 x 28 cm. Purchased 1976. Below, **Ethel Spowers** *Swings* 1932. Colour linocut 24.2 x 26.3 cm. Purchased 1976. Next page, **Mabel Pye** *Bushfire*. Colour linocut 14.2 x 17.1 cm. Purchased 1975. All works AGNSW collection.

more easily-worked medium of lino cutting, a greater number of prints were produced in colour.

Many factors influenced this blossoming of work which continued during the '30s; but perhaps the most important came from the example of contemporary European and American printmakers. It seems Australian artists were especially inspired by reproductions of wood and lino cuts by French and British artists, seen in the English journal *Studio*. Lionel Lindsay, Margaret Preston and, in Melbourne, Napier Waller, also championed the art of relief printmaking and the first Australian exhibition devoted to the woodcut was held in Sydney in 1923. This was reinforced by numerous articles on the subject published by Sydney Ure Smith in his journal *Art in Australia* and built upon a contemporary enthusiasm for Japanese prints.

Artists' interest in wood and lino cuts should also be seen in the context of early 20th century art, which witnessed a continuing breakdown of barriers between art and craft; and of modernism, in which artists increasingly emphasised the formal qualities in their work. There was a new focus on design: simplified shapes and lines, broad areas of flat colour and bold rhythmic patterns – an approach facilitated by wood and lino cutting.

Apart from seven years spent in Berowra during the '30s, Margaret Preston lived in Sydney's north shore suburb of Mosman for nearly 40 years from 1920. Its views inspired some of her most admired woodcuts such as *Mosman Bridge*, with its piercing blues, touches of red and structural design printed in black. Both Preston and Thea Proctor printed only this black design from a carved woodblock, then applied the colour by hand (usually with gouache) to the resulting print. Preston found cutting one block for each colour too laborious and in her defence, declared that Japanese masters of the 17th century had worked in this way, referring in particular to Moronobu.

For both artists, the design and decorative aspects of a work were all-important. This is exemplified in Proctor's *The rose* – among her strongest images in the medium of woodcut – with its cropped, close-up view of fashionable women in a tightly-controlled, asymmetrical composition. In this respect, Proctor was modern, but her theme of shared female delight in the fragrance of a rose, betrays a romantic inclination towards an earlier era and, perhaps, Japanese woodcuts such as those of Utamaro. A portrait of her cousin Hera Roberts (who she frequently used as a model), this woodcut was based on a coloured pencil drawing, designed as a cover for *The Home* magazine in 1927.

Proctor probably traced her drawing onto the woodblock, prior to carving it. Her subsequent application of colour to the print followed her drawing very closely, even to the extent of copying the shaded facial areas of chin and neck. Design was paramount, the accidental unwelcome. On the other hand, Preston was interested in the character of the woodblock itself and allowed the medium to influence her design.

Taught in schools and art schools from at least 1921, a number of Australian artists experimented with lino cutting during the '20s and '30s. Adelaide Perry greatly influenced the popularity of linocuts in Sydney at this time. She taught the process at her Chelsea Art School from 1926 and produced a number of powerful images herself, including *The Bridge*, her largest and most impressive linocut, and a major work from this period. It is interesting not only as an image showing early construction of the Harbour Bridge, but also as one of a relatively small number of urban subjects created by Australian artists in wood and lino cutting.

Although the majority of linocuts produced were black and white (the result of the technique being taught as an exercise in design), many artists experimented in colour, because lino is softer and easier to work than wood. Ethel Spowers, Dorrit Black and Evelyne Syme were inspired by the English artist and teacher Claude Flight, who promoted the craft as the ultimate modern medium. In *The art and craft of lino cutting and printing* (1934) he wrote:

The lino-cut is different to other printing mediums, it has no tradition of technique behind it, so that the student can go forward without thinking of what Bewick or Rembrandt did ... he can do his share in building up a new and more vital art of tomorrow.

To create colour prints, an artist conventionally designs and cuts for each colour – the image evolving progressively, as each is printed and superimposed upon earlier ones. Flight increasingly urged abandonment of the 'key' or design block (traditionally carved first – to act as a register for the subsequent colours – and printed in black), forcing composition to be conceived entirely for colour.

Spowers, like Black and Syme, attended Flight's classes at the Grosvenor School of Modern Art in London and produced a lively group of works, of which *Swings* is a particularly striking example. Counterbalanced with figures of children, the repetitive pattern of swing rope pairs evokes a buoyant joy and thrill in the motion of play.

Mabel Pye is an artist about whom relatively little is known, but the collection has nine of her linocuts, which reveal a range of approaches from the imaginatively abstract *Bushfire* to the poetic colour harmonies of other works on landscape themes.

Of the 11 artists whose work is shown in this Focus Room display, all but one are women. They were doubtless inspired by the example and leadership of fellow women artists and by the decorative potential of such works. Women also predominated in the arts and crafts societies, an important source of information and advice on skills. Due to the popularity of wood and lino cuts with the public and the association with craft, decor and the feminine sphere, such work in Australia, though praised and accepted, was marginalised by the mainstream art establishment. In more recent decades it has been recognised as one of the earliest manifestations of modernism in Australia.

The Art Gallery of New South Wales has a particularly rich collection of prints by these artists, in part due to the enthusiasm of director Hal Missingham and curators Daniel Thomas and Nicholas Draffin, who made numerous purchases in the '60s and '70s, augmented by the generosity of private individuals. Most recently, work has been purchased with funds made available through the benefaction of the Australian prints, drawings and watercolours group of Gallery supporters and given by collectors John Yu and George Soutter.

Yet a large group of prints from this period has not been displayed together for many years – until now. From 1920s elegance, light-heartedness or cheer, to jazz age rhythms or quietly poetic landscape images in the '30s, this Focus Room selection provides a welcome opportunity to highlight and re-appraise an especially strong aspect of work in the Gallery's collection.

HELEN CAMPBELL
Assistant curator, Australian prints, drawings and watercolours

COLOUR, RHYTHM, DESIGN
Wood and lino cuts of the '20s and '30s
MARCH 13 TO MAY 30
Australian Collection Focus Room, ground floor, free

The exhibition's curator, Helen Campbell, will give a talk alongside the works on March 17 at 5.30pm.

"IDEAS ARE GENTLE CREATURES..."

Words from and about an artist in the Gardens

The conversation takes place on a sunny morning in the Royal Botanic Gardens. All around, plants are growing, insects are buzzing and thriving. Such activity is more than matched by the ideas overflowing from the fertile mind of Jenny Pollak, the Gardens' artist in residence for 2009.

When she applied for the residency, she was asked to be more specific about what she wanted to do. At the risk of failing, she declined, on the basis that the whole point of a residency would be to respond to what she discovered as she got to know the gardens. And, having succeeded, she is even surprising herself.

"I am amazed to find how prolific I have been," she declares. "I'm having such a torrent of ideas that I have to keep very focused in order not to be carried off! Ideas are so seductive. They are also very fragile and they don't like to be brought into a concrete form – which is basically what artists do."

Though she identifies mainly as a sculptor, Jenny's artistic mediums include drawing, etching and photography. She planned to keep an artist's book to record the development of her ideas as she worked towards two exhibitions, both opening this month. Within six months, she was into her second book of notes and quotes, sketches and photographs, making all kinds of connections. Eventually she had to force herself to stop.

Growing up in a scientific household – her mother a zoologist and biologist who encouraged her children to look down the microscope at home, her father a biochemist who invited them to his lab at Sydney University – she has a lifetime love of observing the natural world in real time or isolated, preserved and magnified for closer study. "I am still fascinated by things in jars." Her twin sister Ana Pollak's 2007 Dobell Prize winner, *Mullet Creek*, exhibits similar inclinations to observe and portray intimate details in nature.

Showing me sculptural photographs of sea organisms smaller than a grain of sand – which she made using a scanning electron microscope – she recalls how she thought of making giant sculptures in imitation of them which she could share – "but that is not actually creating". Then she wondered about taking water samples from the Gardens' pond as her starting point. But in the meantime, she was reading a book about algae in the Gardens' herbarium and...

"I came across a single sentence about the earliest known oxygenic photosynthesisers – cyanobacteria or blue-green algae – and how their rise to dominance has been described as the most important event in the history of life on earth. For more than a billion years, they were creating oxygen and they pulled it up to the levels where other things could evolve. This happened more than 3.8 billion years ago."

She recalls how her head was immediately filled with "fantastic imagery" which found its way into those artist's books. As a result, and with the help of a grant from the Australia Council, the glass structure of the Gardens' Palm House may – or may not – look like the image on this spread in which she combines lungs and algae as a shared concept for which she envisages an aural accompaniment of breath that echoes the sound of the sea. However her ideas for the installation finally emerge, they will be presented in a combination of video, overlaid sound, glass and other materials, to which she brings elements of magic and alchemy to create a visual metaphor for that extraordinary event of the distant past – which may nudge us to think more about climate change for the future.

The year of her residency coincided with a multitude of events celebrating the 150th year of the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, so she could not help but have evolution on her mind. But she takes "a sideways look" at it in the second of her exhibitions, which is made up of digital photographs, computer generated images and works on paper, as well as some mixed media pieces.

In the Beginning is likely to feature the lovers' graffiti marks on bamboo – "Some of them so beautiful" – and a reference to seaweed that looks like body organs or blood vessels. She was thinking about papering the floor with a printout of *On the Origin of Species* but that morphed into cutting into pages as a hanging screen – and may disappear altogether.

Whatever the final combination, it should achieve her twin aims of sharing ideas and giving people new ways of looking at something. So simple yet so complex.

JILL SYKES

In the Beginning, *Red Box Gallery, February 5 to March 26, and* 21% O_2 *in the Palm House, February 12 to 23, both by Jenny Pollak and free at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney.*

Two of Jenny Pollak's early ideas for her Royal Botanic Gardens exhibitions: a fusion of lungs and algae suspended over light reflected by glass on silvered paper in the Palm House (top), and bamboo marked with lovers' graffiti for *In the Beginning*, © the artist. Opposite, an aerial view of the Gardens, photo by Jamie Plaza, Botanic Gardens Trust.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT – Jenny Pollak writes about her work

The fundamental wellspring for most of my images lies in the natural world and nature remains for me the most abiding source of inspiration. The industrial and man-made material with which I sometimes work as a sculptor and photographer consistently harks back to its origins in nature, as if they remained encoded in its inanimate structure. It is this unlikely and often surreal liaison between the natural and the man-made that fascinates me. Intentionally and unintentionally, I arrange their assignations with the fervour of a matchmaker.

It is not simple for me to write about my work because most of my ideas come to me intuitively, not intellectually. Sometimes they arrive as fully formed images, as surprising to me as if they had just been pulled out of a magician's hat and with as few clues as to how they got there. Most ideas, however, come about more slowly as my imagination takes me along a playful series of visual or verbal associations, jump by unlikely jump, as if I were following a trail of crumbs down an obscure and disused path. This makes completing a work something like an act of faith.

For me, bringing a work to completion requires a process of contemplation, observation and trust, patiently allowing an idea to come to life. Ideas are gentle creatures and do not respond well to being brought to a concrete form. Sometimes they are lost or destroyed in the process. Sometimes they are so changed by the journey that they are no longer recognisable. But occasionally a work retains some of the magic that inspired the journey and that is what makes it all worth the effort.

Many of us have lost the acuteness of observation that we had as children, our focus turned in on the more material objectives that society demands from us. I believe it is the job of the artist to bring back that acuity, to awaken the senses and re-engage people with the world about them.

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Neil HADDON *Insect_0267*, 2009
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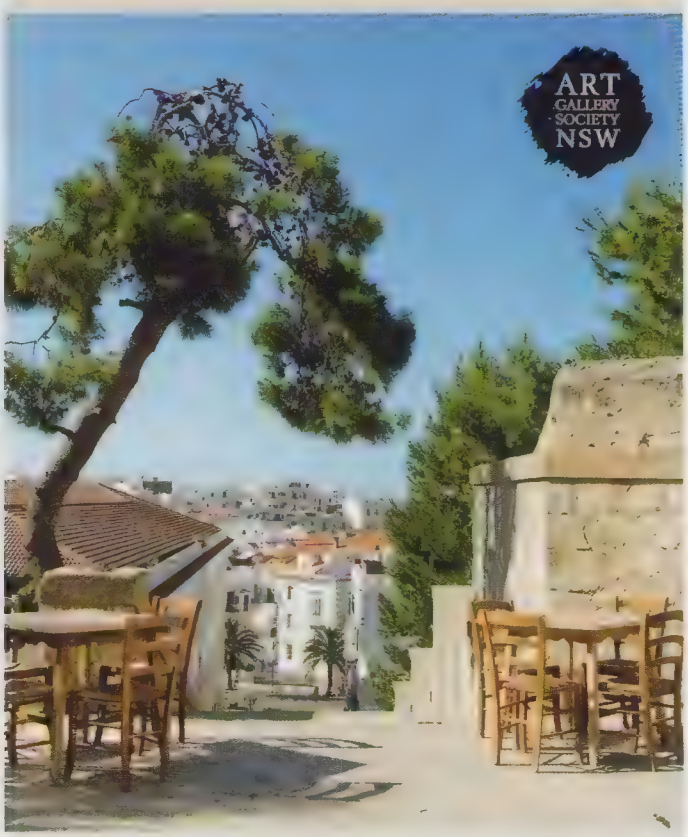

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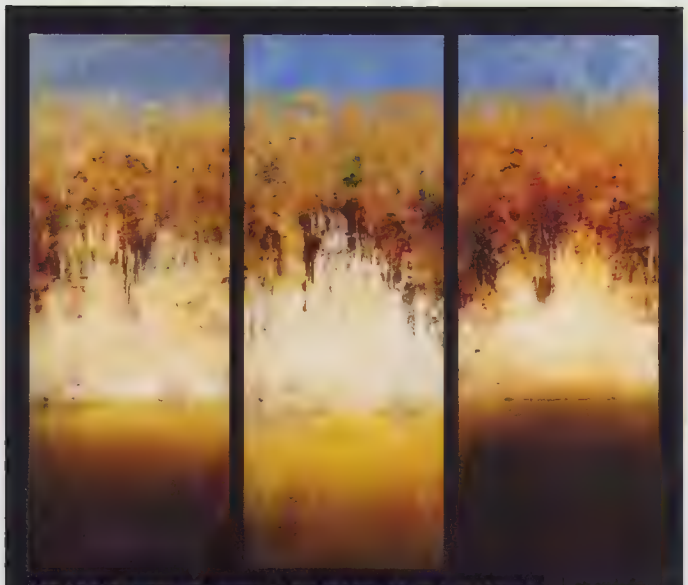

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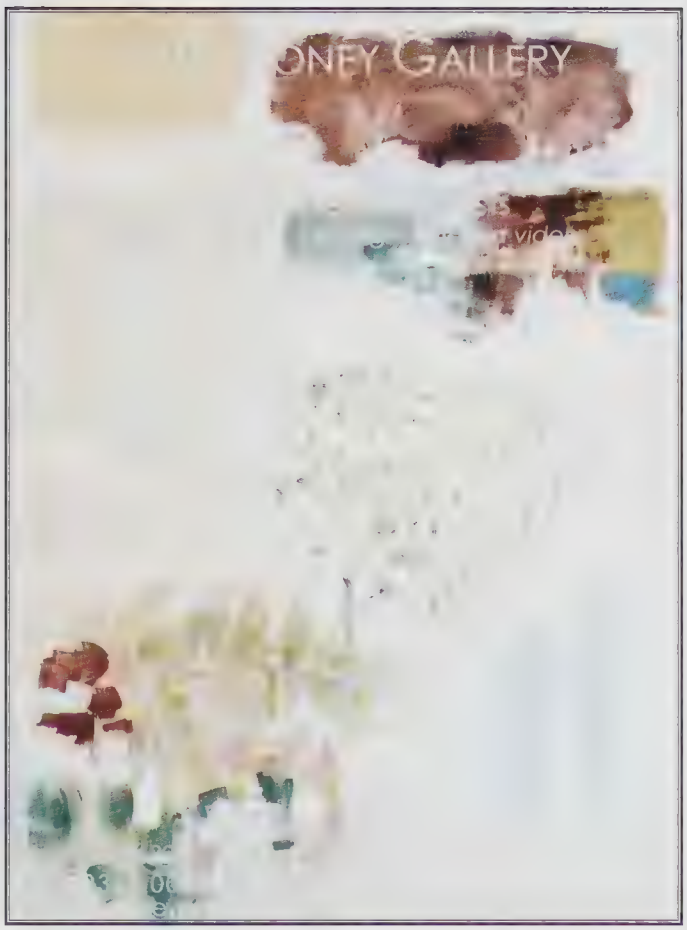

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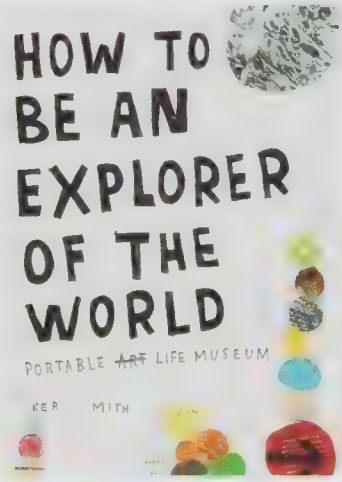
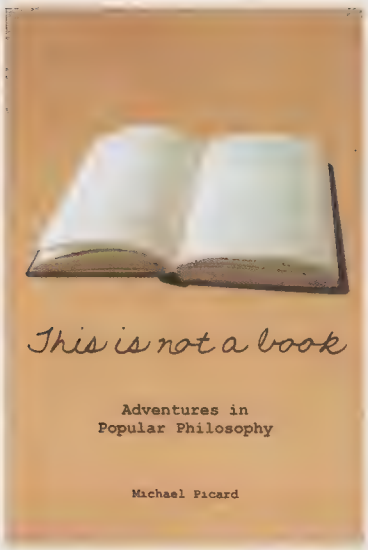




How to Be an Explorer of the World
Keri Smith, Perigee, pb $19.95

This Book Does Not Exist
Gary Hayden and Michael Picard, Allen & Unwin, pb $20

This Is Not a Book
Michael Picard, Allen & Unwin, pb $20

This Means This This Means That
Sean Hall, Laurence King, pb $49.95

I have never been a believer in new year resolutions since I discovered that I am prone to breaking them within the first few weeks, thereby starting each new year feeling guilty rather than inspired. I have decided to take a far more positive approach to the prospect of another year, preferring to better myself rather than beat myself up. And so, true to form, I turn to books for my salvation and I have found a few which will do the trick. If you are like me and ready to clear away some of the mental cobwebs which amass from day to day, I have compiled a selection of titles that may help.

The first on my list is *How to Be an Explorer of the World: Portable ~~Art~~ Life Museum* by Keri Smith. She is a prolific writer and creator, whose artist-style books are designed for interaction. Her previous offering, *Wreck This Journal*, invited readers to do just that. *Explorer*, not surprisingly, takes the reader on a journey to find interest and intrigue in minutiae and the mundane. She cites references and inspirations from Joseph Beuys to Tom Robbins. Through many tasks and missions, Keri Smith encourages her readers to look more closely at the world in which they function every day. I found some of her projects gave me the chance to slow down, to look closely at things I wouldn't normally pay any attention to and be more aware of what was happening around me. For a practical book, there is something quite meditative about it. Not all the tasks are appealing, but the advantage of a book over a course is that you can choose what you want to do and ignore the rest.

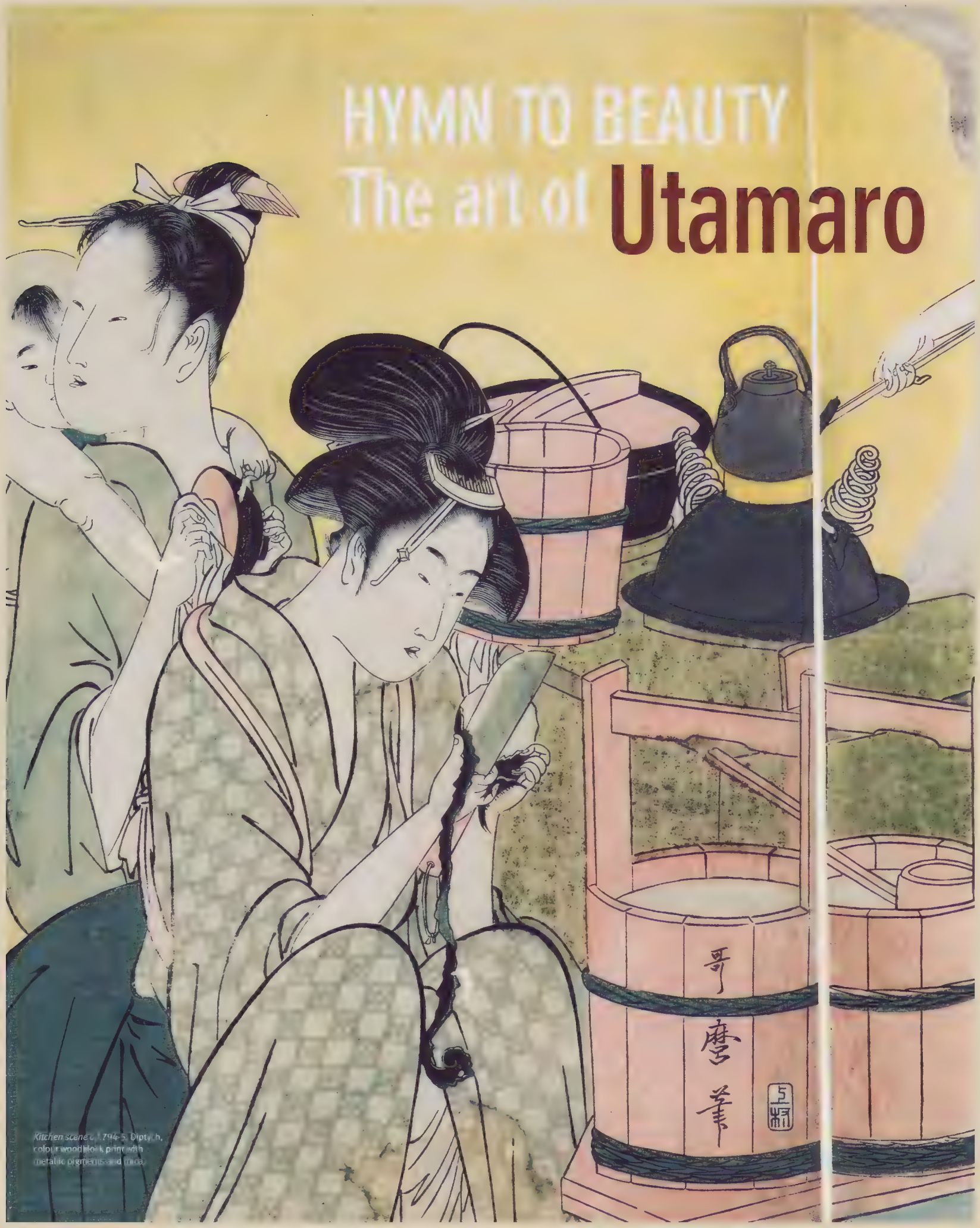
The next two books are the beginning of a new series designed to make you think – *This Book Does Not Exist: Adventures in the Paradoxical* and *This is Not a Book: Adventures in Popular Philosophy*. The titles alone had me intrigued. Both books are introductions into the sometimes confusing world of philosophy and the very confusing world of the paradoxical, but rather than just being dry texts informing you of someone else's discovery, each of these books gives practical examples and logic puzzles to work out for yourself. *This Book Does Not Exist* had me mulling over some of the problems for hours, with joyful exasperation, which I guess is a paradox in itself.

Finally, I found a text book on semiotics. Sounds dry I know, but *This Means This This Means That: A User's Guide to Semiotics* is a wonderful introduction to the concept of what is, in very basic terms, the theory of signs. Each right hand page has an illustration or a puzzle to work out, with the answer overleaf. It is a great way in which to test yourself. Again, another book you can just dip into and challenge your thought processes whenever you are in the mood.

I like to think of all these books as "practical" books, rather than text books, although only one of them asks you to pick up a pencil and draw something. Each book, in some way, changed my perception of the world, either physically or mentally, and already I feel better for it. Except for some of the paradox puzzles which are doing my head in.

DENISE FAULKNER
Book buyer, Gallery Shop

HYMN TO BEAUTY
The art of Utamaro



Kitchen scene c. 1794–5. Diptych, colour woodblock print with metallic pigments and mica

Kitagawa Utamaro (c.1753-1806) was famous during his lifetime as one of the most successful designers of *ukiyo-e* or 'pictures of the floating world' woodblock prints. Then, nearly a century after his death, he became the second most well-known Japanese artist in the Western world – after Katsushika Hokusai – due to the enthusiastic promotion by the French aesthete Edmond de Goncourt. In his seminal monograph *Outamaro, Le peintre des maisons vertes* of 1891, the first catalogue raisonné of Utamaro's work in any language, de Goncourt coined the image of the artist as a master portraitist of the predominantly female inhabitants of the 'green houses' of the title – 'green houses' being a euphemism for the Yoshiwara, the licensed pleasure quarters of Edo, today's Tokyo.

Yet, while it is true that about one-third of Utamaro's 2000 authenticated designs for broadsheet prints and illustrated books deal with subjects related to the Yoshiwara, confirming de Goncourt's appellation, the artist also excelled in other themes and actually achieved his first breakthrough with motifs outside the floating world. And it is this stylistic and thematic diversity of Utamaro's oeuvre that an exhibition in the Asian Gallery aims to showcase through about 80 works from the collection of the Asian Art Museum, National Museums in Berlin.

Information about Utamaro's family background and early childhood is extremely scarce. From records in publications of the period, it can be surmised that he was trained at first in the studio of Toriyama Sekien. Originally a painter in the style of the orthodox Kano school, Sekien is better known today as a book illustrator and as the teacher of numerous renowned *ukiyo-e* artists. Under the tutelage of Sekien, who had excellent connections in the floating world publishing industry, Utamaro made his debut as a woodblock print designer in 1770. In the following decade, he earned his living with illustrations for poetry albums, popular literature and small-sized prints of Kabuki actors.

In the first years of the 1780s, Utamaro became acquainted with the publisher Tsutaya Jûzaburô. This encounter brought about the most significant change in the artist's life and career. Only three years older than Utamaro, Tsutaya had already achieved remarkable commercial success with the publication of illustrated guide books to the Yoshiwara. Tsutaya's aspiration, however, was to become the top publisher in the more prestigious genre of single-sheet prints, and in the young Utamaro he spotted the talent who could assist him in reaching this goal. The bond between the publisher and the artist went beyond a mere business relationship, as for the remainder of the 1780s, Tsutaya not only provided his protégé with accommodation, but also introduced him to the various illustrious literary coteries in Edo. Moreover, he held the exclusive rights over the artist's production.

A watershed in Utamaro's career was the publication in 1788 of the two-volume anthology *Picture book: Selected insects*. Bearing a foreword by the eminent poet Yadoya no Meshimori and a postscript by Utamaro's teacher Toriyama Sekien, the anthology consists of 15 double pages. Each page features two *kyôka*, or 'crazy verses', by famous poets of the day and a superbly executed depiction of two types of insects or amphibians arranged among exuberant flowers and plants, from which this issue's cover was taken. The playful mood of the poems, which select an insect or an amphibian as a trope to express the sentiments of love, is wonderfully balanced by elegant brushwork and elaborate printing techniques.

Sumptuously illustrated *kyôka* anthologies like *Selected insects* were a new niche market that Tsutaya explored in the mid-1780s. They were privately commissioned by the numerous literary circles in Edo which competed with each other in their prestige and exclusivity. Since no cost was spared to ensure the highest artistic quality for these anthologies, Tsutaya could hire outstanding block carvers and printers to work alongside his prime designer, Utamaro. In the short period between 1786 and 1790, Tsutaya and Utamaro produced no less than 13 luxuriously printed anthologies. The startling freshness of these works – illustrated by four examples in the show – lies in Utamaro's introduction of themes often found in classical Japanese paintings like naturalistic depictions of grasses and insects, scenes of courtly splendour or austere monochrome landscapes into floating world publications. His mastery of painting styles commonly associated with established art lineages like the Tosa and the Kano schools reflects his thorough education in Sekien's studio.

In the wake of the Kansei Reforms, promulgated between 1789 and 1793 to re-establish moral conduct and curb excessive spending among the populace, a series of edicts was enacted that significantly affected the publishing industry. Some of these measures brought an end to the lucrative market of deluxe *kyôka* anthologies and erotic albums (*shunpon*), in which the team Tsutaya/Utamaro was the dominant force. Attempting to rescue his business after being severely fined for the publication of three novelettes deemed to be detrimental to public morals in 1791, Tsutaya turned to the well-proven, profitable genre of 'depictions of beautiful women' (*bijinga*), triggering a shift in Utamaro's focus.

The release of the series *Ten types in the physiognomic study of women* – later renamed *Ten classes of women's physiognomy* – in 1792-93 marked not only a triumphant comeback for Tsutaya and Utamaro, but also a new chapter in the representation of women in Japanese visual arts. In the series, women of varied social status and ages are captured in a half-length format in an instant of movement as they glance over the shoulder while wringing a bath towel, lean forward to check blackened teeth in the mirror or lasciviously exhale the smoke after taking a relaxing bath (opposite). The iconic power of the portraits is enhanced remarkably by Utamaro's invention of setting the models against a plain background covered with white shiny mica powder.

The compositional format of these works is generally known as *ôkubi-e* (literally 'large-head pictures' or 'bust portraits'). Developed in the 1780s for portraits of Kabuki actors, this mode of cropping the subject to reveal the upper half of the body, or the face, served to lure the public into believing that they were more intimately and directly engaged with their theatre idols. Recognising the expressive potential of this approach, Utamaro applied it to the depiction of women, thus breaking away from the conventions set by his predecessors. The 'close-up' device of *ôkubi-e*, especially in its extreme form focusing only on the face, enabled Utamaro to capture a fleeting expression and mood, imbuing his subject with a psychological depth hitherto rarely seen in the portrayal of women. The absence of any background elements and the cropped picture plane draw the viewer's attention not only to the women's expressions, but also to details such as textile patterns, gestures and poses that reveal something about the personal circumstances of the subject.

Encouraged by the success of these groundbreaking series, Utamaro continued to exploit the iconic power of the *ôkubi-e* mode in his prolific production of *bijinga* in the following years. The majority of his subjects are high-ranking courtesans, celebrated geisha or shop-girls renowned for their seductive beauty. These women were the 'billboard girls' of certain establishments. Their representation in prints acted as publicity for the woman herself and as advertisements for the commercial establishment or business to which she was affiliated. Being public faces, these women were interpreted as icons of feminine beauty and fashion trendsetters. They were, so to say, the It-Girls of their time, chased not by paparazzi, but by *ukiyo-e* artists.

The set of prints titled *The twelve hours in the 'green houses'*, featuring the women of the Yoshiwara, is celebrated as one of Utamaro's most pioneering works. Published by Tsutaya in 1794, it takes up the 12 double-hours of the Japanese zodiacal clock to document a courtesan's day. Besides scenes common in *ukiyo-e*, such as those of a courtesan composing letters to a lover or patron (right), entertaining a customer, or strutting along the main boulevard of Yoshiwara en route to an assignation, the set also contains images entirely new to the genre such as a nocturnal visit to the toilet, or of courtesans retiring to rest after finally dispatching the last client in the early morning. Such glimpses behind the scenes in the 'after hours' of the pleasure quarter promote an image of Utamaro having an intimate understanding of women. For viewers they create the illusion that they are privy to an insider's, almost voyeuristic, knowledge of a woman's private sphere.

For print designers, the key to success in the lucrative, yet highly competitive, genre of *bijinga* was compliance with established conventions, while at the same time exploring novel techniques and approaches. By glamorising life in the Yoshiwara and maintaining the allure of the ravishing, fashionable, cultivated and aloof courtesan pursuing accomplished pastimes like flower-arranging (right), reading or poetry composition, Utamaro and his contemporaries ignored the harsh realities of courtesans' lives as indentured sex workers – violence at the hands of abusive clients, deprivation and diseases.

Besides the introduction of novelties such as the bust portrait format and the application of mica background, Utamaro also endeavoured to push the technical boundaries of the woodblock print medium and to create more complex spatiality in the two-dimensional picture plane through the frequent use of transparent textiles or glass, the reflection of mirrors and water or by applying the so-called 'boneless' technique to depict beautiful women (above left). Traditionally used in paintings of flowers and birds, this technique shapes forms by flat areas of colour without outlines.

Many of the compositional and technical advances introduced by Utamaro influenced the work of contemporaries included in the present exhibition, such as Chôbunshi Eishi (1756–1829), Ichirakutei Eisui (active c.1790s–1800), Chôkôsai Eishô (active c.1793–99), Eishôsai Chôki (active c. late 1790s–early 1800s). The distinctive 'Utamaro style', formulated in the *ôkubi-e* of the early 1790s, reached its apogee in the mid-1790s, prompting numerous publishers in Edo to seek the artist's collaboration. In response to their demands, Utamaro expanded his repertoire and extended his gaze outside the Yoshiwara to women of middle-class households. In doing so, he rendered townswomen engaging in mundane chores like cooking (previous spread), doing needlework or dressing

Clockwise from right, *Yamauba and Kintarô: peeling persimmons*, 1796-99. Colour woodblock print. *Woman exhaling smoke from a pipe* from the series *Ten classes of women's physiognomy*, c.1792-93. Colour woodblock print with white mica ground. *'Hanaôgi in Act 4'*, from the set *The Chûshingura drama parodied by famous beauties: a set of twelve prints*, after 1796. Colour woodblock print. Previous page, clockwise from right, *Hour of the dog (8-10 pm)* from the series *The twelve hours in the 'green houses' (Yoshiwara)*, c.1794. Colour woodblock print with metal sprinkles. *Okoma and Saizaburô*, from the series *Elegant five-needled pine*, c.1797-98. Colour woodblock print. *The white surcoat* from the series *New patterns of brocade woven in Utamaro style*, c.1797-98. Colour woodblock print. All images by **Kitagawa Utamaro**, courtesy of the Asian Art Museum, National Museums in Berlin, photography by Jürgen Liepe.

hair in vivid colour and vivacity, and imbued them with a grace and an understated erotic appeal that matched the courtesans of the Yoshiwara.

Of the types of non-Yoshiwara themes that increasingly appeared in Utamaro's work in the late 1790s, compositions of ill-fated lovers and mothers doting on their sons were among his favourites. Both offered dramatic tension and veiled erotic appeal; as such they were poignant enough to attract the public but subtle enough to escape censorship. Tragic stories of star-crossed lovers, whose social circumstances prohibited their liaison and whose lives could only be joined through a double love suicide had been popular in literature and drama since the late 17th century and later inspired many *ukiyo-e* print artists. Utamaro is credited with some of the most emotionally charged single-sheet compositions showing lovers in moments of despair, subdued passion or on their journey towards death. Prints such as the depiction of the reunion scene between the disinherited samurai son Saizaburô and his former lover Okoma (left) provided Utamaro with an opportunity to visualise oppressed passion and physical contact between the sexes, normally a characteristic reserved for erotic imagery. They also offer him the rare chance to portray men as appealingly as women.

Suggestive depictions of mothers and children, on the other hand, exemplify Utamaro's unique approach in using an innocuous domestic scene as a pretext for the eroticisation of the female body. For example, the numerous prints showing the Wonderboy Kintarô playing with his mother, the mountain hag Yamauba (top right), permit a visualisation of physical intimacy without transgressing censorship laws. They also assist in creating an imaginary realm, in which a male viewer can identify himself with the figure of the child, enjoying the uncontested attention and affection of the woman depicted.

A new acquisition by the Art Gallery of NSW completes this first survey of Utamaro's art in Australia. Published around 1803, the three-volume set *Picture book: The laughing tippler* not only manifests Utamaro's outstanding skills and sensibility in designing erotic images (*shunga*), as well as his inventiveness in building up the narrative, it is also one of the best works in the late phase of Utamaro's career. Each of the three volumes opens with a bust portrait of a woman, followed by explicit scenes of sexual intimacy and ends with a close-up view of the genitalia of the woman depicted at the beginning. Together, they represent a telling portrayal of the sexuality of three different classes of women – the virgin, the married townswoman and the courtesan.

Whether depictions of flora and fauna, high-ranked courtesans, diligent housewives, affectionate mothers or passionate lovers, Utamaro's prints have been appreciated for more than 200 years for their superb elegance in brushwork and composition, meticulous attention to detail and seductive allure. Their aesthetic appeal is such that questions about the moralistic content and political correctness of numerous works, the integrity of the artist and whether the beauty he depicted is real or contrived seem of little importance. Viewers might well find resonance with Charles Baudelaire's adoration of beauty, which the poet expressed so poignantly in his verse *Hymn to Beauty* of 1857. The exhibition's title takes its inspiration from this poem.

KHANH TRINH
Curator of Japanese art

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The sacred art of EARLE BACKEN

Religious belief is rarely central in the life of an Australian contemporary artist, or so it seems. But when it is, as it was for Earle Backen, exemplary work is produced. Backen was an exceptional and disarmingly modest man whose oeuvre of paintings, drawings, prints and watercolours deserves far broader exposure and explication than it has received to date.

This is highlighted by the release of *Earle Backen, sacred art* by William Carter. Published in 2009 by St Laurence Press, it reveals what too few of us who liked and admired him in life, fully appreciated – that Backen's religious beliefs were integral to his life and art. Central to the book is the remarkable sequence of religious paintings that he completed not long before his death. They are installed at Christ Church St Laurence at the Central Railway Station end of George Street, and represent a fitting conclusion to a good and disciplined life, well and fully lived. Sensitively realised in sharply heightened colour that is typical of his late work, they are clear expressions of faith. Backen was present when his paintings were installed on the walls, and a moving memorial service was held at the church.

Admired and respected by his peers and many students, Backen was a major influence on contemporary printmaking in Australia after returning to Sydney from Paris in 1959. A recipient of the NSW Travelling Art Scholarship in 1954, he studied and worked at S.W. Hayter's Paris print studio and workshop. Subsequently, he was highly influential as a leading printmaker and principal printmaking lecturer in Sydney in the 1960s, '70s and '80s. He produced his finest work after he retired from teaching, returning to painting in oil and watercolour, firmly establishing himself as a major artist with still life arrangements of refined assurance and classical calm. At the core of these late works is undoubted deep religious conviction. Occasionally there are readily discernable references to religious iconography in his work – the icon of Edessa in an etching from 1972 or part of York Cathedral's Madonna and child in *Still life with disparate objects* 1998 for example (see *Look*, October 2005, page 25). His faith must also have prompted his interest in the Middle East, since the landscapes he drew and painted based on his travels there are often imbued with quiet mystery or a heavenly light.

I recommend *Earle Backen, sacred art* to students of religious art, Backen's in particular. Not only does it give a thorough account of religious imagery, with a glossary and notes on various saints and martyrs, it also includes a number of photographs of this much loved and missed man and artist. It is a fine book that suitably creates a hunger for a publication with colour plates of the many other aspects of Backen's art, together with a comprehensive account of his life and work.

HENDRIK KOLENBERG
Senior curator of Australian prints, drawings and watercolours

Earle Backen, sacred art is available at the Gallery Shop for $70.

It was 'against the rules' for an art gallery to have windows and daylight coming in – but the views of Sydney Harbour were irresistible. Despite initial resistance from those who ran the AGNSW in the late 1960s, the architect Andrew Andersons won the day, letting in natural light and offering art lovers a panorama of the Gallery's unique surroundings. For a surprising revelation of what was there before, turn to page 40. These photos come from the AGNSW Research Library and Archive.

DIVERSE MEMORIES

From the Gallery's new wing to planted koalas and igneous rock

Daniel Thomas, later director of the Art Gallery of South Australia, was a curator at the Art Gallery of New South Wales from 1958 to 1977. This is the second of two edited extracts from an extended interview by Gallery archivist Steven Miller. The first appeared in the previous edition of Look.

In 1972, the Gallery renovations and the building of the Captain Cook wing were completed and the building reopened.

There had been a firm commitment from New South Wales government to build the Captain Cook wing – to at last upgrade a dreadfully backward building. The director, Hal Missingham, made a song and dance, telling them we would never be allowed masterpieces from places like MoMA, New York, unless we upgraded. Which was what eventually happened, in 1975, with MoMA's *Modern Masters: Manet to Matisse* and unprecedented long queues outside the building. The deputy director, Tony Tuckson, was overseas during 1967 studying art museum architecture. Back home, he and Andrew Andersons, from the NSW Government Architect's office, zoomed into detailed design. For that upgrade and extension Andrew said, "Look, it's against the rules to have windows and daylight coming into art exhibition galleries, but the urban views out onto Woolloomooloo, or onto the rocky headlands of Sydney Harbour or into the great Moreton Bay figs of The Domain are all marvellous. Hardly any art museum in the world would have such opportunities. You've got to have the drama of those views because that's what makes Sydney special, and if you don't have the specialness of Sydney visible from inside the art museum, it'll be a pity." None of us thought that was a good idea at first but he talked us into it.

When the Gallery reopened we put the most recent Australian and foreign art together in the entrance space, instead of at the far end of chronological circuits, and that has remained a way of giving

a lively first experience. I remember everybody who'd come from Melbourne and Adelaide and Brisbane said they really liked the profusion of floor pieces as well as the wall displays of contemporary art in the new wing, and in the old wing the crowded walls in a 'salon' display plus some decorative arts in glass cases. It's only temporary exhibitions that I believe should be sparser and making firm points – art history points, critical points, social points. A profuse collection display is more suggestive, less bullying; a place where visitors can roam free and easily. Remember the profusion principle...

Once the upgraded building was there, we raced into our own exhibition-making: *Recent Australian Art* in the same year as the Grace Cossington Smith retrospective, the same year as the David Strachan memorial exhibition – three big original research efforts, with publications. And later the Tony Tuckson memorial exhibition; he had died in 1973 just after we put a painting of his into *Recent Australian Art*. Tuckson's retrospective, international-quality abstract expressionist works, was a surprise to many; he'd had only two solo exhibitions, both in the very last years of his life. Peter Laverty, who was director by then, was extremely supportive during that exhibition-making moment of mine. Peter also said yes when my assistant curator, Frances McCarthy, suggested small 'project' shows of local and contemporary art, non-stop every month from 1975 onwards.

In 1974 the exhibition Some Recent American Art came from the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

The organisers had been surprised by the request from Australia to include conceptual art along with the classic Minimalism — Donald Judd wall sculptures, a Carl Andre row of bricks, a Sol LeWitt wall drawing. It was the first exhibition that the newly formed visual arts board of the Australia Council threw a lot of money at. The artist members of the Visual Arts Board wanted newest American art, more recent than pop and op. The money given by the Australia Council brought live artists out from the United States, to install work of their own or simply to be present...

More international artists visited Sydney in the mid-1970s in connection with the John Kaldor Art Projects. Among them were Gilbert & George, and later Nam June Paik, who came with the performance artist Charlotte Moorman.

An ABC television producer, Brian Adams, decided to film senior curator Daniel Thomas entertaining artist visitors. Brian knew I was constantly taking people to Ku-ring-gai Chase to see Aboriginal rock engravings and peculiarly Australian rock vegetation, or to the coast for Christo's wrapped rocks. The picnic for Gilbert & George was elaborately stage-managed for television. I arranged the delivery of a koala from an animal park, the Home of Skippy. After the picnic lunch I was to lead a walk along a particular cliff track, watch for a cross marked in the gravel, and then exclaim with (false) surprise, "Oh, look!" Koalas climb to the top of the nearest tree once released and it was high above the track. Gilbert & George leapt up the steep bank for closer inspection. I saw a big cardboard box clearly labelled Pet Supplies, pretended not to notice it, and hoped they hadn't noticed it or seen the well hidden koala-minders. A day or two later it emerged that they had indeed noticed a cardboard box, but had just thought, oh, typical Australian litter...

Paik's picnic was magical – only me and him and one other person; it wasn't a large performance for television. We had settled

Tony Tuckson *Five white lines (vertical), black background* 1970-73. Synthetic polymer paint on hardboard 213.5 x 122 cm. Bequest of Annette Margaret Dupree 1996. AGNSW collection. © Tony Tuckson estate. Opposite: **Dawidi Djulwarak** *Snakes and fish anticipating rain* c.1950s. Natural pigments on bark 44 x 17 cm. Purchased 1962. AGNSW collection. © Estate of the artist and Bula 'bula Arts.

into champagne and brie and bread and mangos on a stone wall, with a perfect 'Japanese' view of Scotland Island, when a bus pulled up with passengers from an old people's home on an outing, and a couple sat down close beside us with plainer food in brown paper bags. A kookaburra squawked us into silence and the old man said, "Is it a nightingale?" The woman said, "What's a nightingale?" He answered, "It's a bird they have in England, and in poetry." She said, "Where's England? And what's poetry?" And he answered, "England is where the Queen lives, and poetry is noble thoughts and words."

So that was the picnic with Paik – totally unarranged and extraordinary, much stranger than the koala and the gin for Gilbert & George at the same rock headland beauty spot.

Towards the end of their interview Miller asks Thomas about how his views of art and the Australian landscape have developed since his early years at the AGNSW.

Russell Drysdale had a real feeling for primeval rocks growing out of desert country; he took an interest in deep-time geological history, fossil bones as well, and archaeology. But later, outsiders heightened my consciousness of the local landscape. Keith Sonnier, a visitor for the exhibition *Some Recent American Art*, was, like most of them, immensely impressed by the Aboriginal bark paintings on display in the Gallery, the extreme delicacy of their brushwork, the subtle colours of the ochres and the very fine hatching in the bark paintings. American artists were more familiar with rougher Melanesian art in the American museums, or African art, neither of which had the refinement and delicacy of Australian Aboriginal bark painting. When I took him to Ku-ring-gai Chase, Sonnier said: "Ah, the semi-arid vegetation has the same super-refinement and delicacy." He saw a parallel with the work of Agnes Martin, an abstract painter from Canada – very fine pencil grids on minimalist big canvases. Her work was about close observation of nature, about the minuteness of grasses within a vast expanse. It's a kind of aesthetic that maybe only a Canadian prairie person like Agnes Martin or Australians like Fred Williams could or should develop...

It's not the surface look of the landscape that interests me, it's more the underlying forces of nature. The aesthetic force of successful art, its energy, is like the unseen-at-first-sight history of land, of geology and volcanoes and deltas and mud turning into stone – the slow forces over millions of years. I'm a pagan. I find rocks and trees interesting.

I'm growing old in Tasmania near where I was born. The geology is quite unlike the rest of Australia. It's dolerite, very erratic and diverse – igneous, but not volcanic. Dolerite never came up into the open air as liquid rock, it groped around underground and eventually became exposed only when the surface eroded away. Tasmania and Antarctica are the two dolerite heavens in the world for geologists. To have these spectacular dolerites – Cradle Mountain near my own coastal clifftop rocks, or Mount Wellington above Hobart, or Ben Lomond beyond Launceston – to have these iconic rocks of Tasmania always highly visible and very different from all the other rocks in the world except Antarctica, is pretty inspiring. So let us say, my childhood rocks helped me feel for the long-term forces of nature, they ignited the way towards my life of work with the slow-burning forces of art.

The recording and transcription of Steven Miller's full eight-hour interview, conducted in 2006, belong to the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales library. Judith White, a former executive director of the Art Gallery Society, selected these excerpts.

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Suburb _____ State _____ Postcode _____

Phone DAYTIME ( ) _____ AFTER HOURS ( ) _____

1. email _____ DOB __/__/__

2. email _____ DOB __/__/__

Message for gift card _____

I am interested in receiving:

◯ Contempo e-news ◯ Corporate membership information

To join the Society, call 02 9225 1878 or mail this form to Art Gallery Society of NSW, Art Gallery Rd, Sydney NSW 2000 www.artgallerysociety.org.au

WIN A TRIP TO EUROPE WITH TRAVEL DRAW 2010

Tickets make fantastic gifts for family and friends!

DRAW ENDS FEBRUARY 21, 2010. PRIZE POOL WORTH MORE THAN $86,000

Member name _____

Member number _____

Select quantity and complete payment details below

◯ $6 each ◯ 5 for $25 ◯ 10 for $40 ◯ 20 for $70 ◯ 35 for $100

TICKET TOTAL $ _____

(please add this to your total below if renewing membership)

JOIN FOR 1 YEAR OR SAVE WITH 3 YEAR MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY	1 YEAR	3 YEAR (SAVE 10%)	
Individual	◯ $107	◯ $290	$ _____
Joint (2 people, same address)	◯ $142	◯ $375	$ _____
Household (2 adults, 2 children)	◯ $167	◯ $430	$ _____
Contempo			
Individual	◯ $107	◯ $290	$ _____
Joint	◯ $142	◯ $375	$ _____
Premier	◯ $250	◯ $680	$ _____
Student	◯ $60	◯ N/A	$ _____
Full time student ID no: _____			
Country over 80km from Sydney			
Individual	◯ $95	◯ $250	$ _____
Joint	◯ $117	◯ $315	$ _____
Household	◯ $145	◯ $390	$ _____
For **overseas** please add $65 (1yr) & $195 (3yr) postage & handling			P&H $ _____
Gift membership (refer to membership categories & rates above)			
Membership category : _____	◯ 1 Year	◯ 3 Years	$ _____

TOTAL $ _____

Sign up for Automatic Membership Renewal & save $10 on joining – ($10)

◯ Yes, I _____ (signature) authorise my membership to be renewed automatically when it falls due, using the credit card listed below. I may cancel this agreement at any time. Not available for student membership.

FINAL TOTAL $ _____

PAYMENT METHOD (please tick payment options)

Please accept my payment of $ _____ by: Today's date __/__/__

◯ **CREDIT CARD** ◯ American Express ◯ Visa ◯ MasterCard

Card Number |__|__|__|__| |__|__|__|__| |__|__|__|__| |__|__|__|__|

Cardholder's name _____

Cardholder's signature _____ Expiry __/__

◯ **CHEQUE** payable to Art Gallery Society of New South Wales

- Prices include joining fee (except for students and premier members) and are inclusive of GST.
- Three year membership fees are non-refundable.
- For membership renewal please see our website: www.artgallerysociety.org.au

Privacy statement: the Art Gallery Society of New South Wales respects information privacy. To see our full privacy policy please go to www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/membership/privacy or call (02) 9225 1878.

OFFICE USE ONLY ◯ Free admission ticket ◯ Pack ◯ Cash ◯ OTP ◯ MD ◯ ML ◯ ID

TICKET *application*

EVENT	MEMBERS	NO. OF TICKETS	NON-MEMBERS	NO. OF TICKETS	TOTAL
Art and Australia lecture series (starts Wed Feb 3) Single lecture	$25		$35		
Art and Australia lecture series (starts Wed Feb 3) Full term	$220		$310		
Art and Australia lecture series (starts Wed Feb 3) Full subscription	$530		$740		
Contempo Book Club (starts Sun Feb 28) Single session	$20		$25		
Contempo Book Club (starts Sun Feb 28) Full subscription	$100		$135		
Society Kids Sat Feb 6 / Sun Feb 7 (please specify session)	$25		N/A		
Art Club Sat Feb 6 / Sun Feb 7 (please specify session)	$25		N/A		
Rupert Bunny coffee morning Tue Feb 9	$15		$15		
Absolute Beginners – Pencil Fri Feb 12	$45		$50		
Art of Utamaro Symposium Sat Feb 13	$80		$90 $60 concession		
Teenage art workshop Sat Feb 13	$30		$40		
Contempo Mixed Media Sun Feb 14	$75		$90		
Twilight Gallery Express Wed Feb 17 & 24 (please specify)	$48		$48		
Printmaking workshop Sat Feb 20	$110		$120		
Armchair travel – Darwin to Broome Sat Feb 20	$15		$15		
Contempo Art Quest Sat Feb 20	$45		$55 $40pp groups of 6		
Contempo Experiments in Sculpture Sun Feb 21	$95		$110		
An Evening with Nicholas Harding Wed Feb 23	$35		$45		
A History of the AGNSW coffee lecture Fri Feb 26	$15		$15		
Skills and Mediums Fri Feb 26	$75		$85		
Pure Abstract workshop Fri / Sat / Sun Feb 26 / 27 / 28	$295		$305		
Drawing the Figure I Sat Feb 27	$30		$40		
Drawing the Figure II Sat Feb 27	$40		$50		
				GRAND TOTAL	

1. Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Dr _____
FIRST NAME SURNAME

2. Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Dr _____
FIRST NAME SURNAME

Address _____

Suburb _____ State _____ Postcode _____

Phone (daytime) ( ) _____ (after hours) ( ) _____

Email _____

Membership Number (if applicable) _____

Please accept my payment of $ _____ **by:** Today's date / /

◯ **CREDIT CARD PAYMENT** ◯ American Express ◯ Visa ◯ MasterCard

Card Number |__|__|__|__| |__|__|__|__| |__|__|__|__| |__|__|__|__|

Cardholder's name _____

Cardholder's signature _____ card expires / _____

◯ **CHEQUE** payable to Art Gallery Society of New South Wales

BOOKINGS + INFORMATION

Have you tried booking online?
www.artgallerysociety.org.au

By phone: 02 9225 1878
Mail: The Ticketing Department
Art Gallery Society of New South Wales
Art Gallery Road, Sydney NSW 2000
All tickets posted unless booking received within 7 days of event, in which case they should be collected at the function.

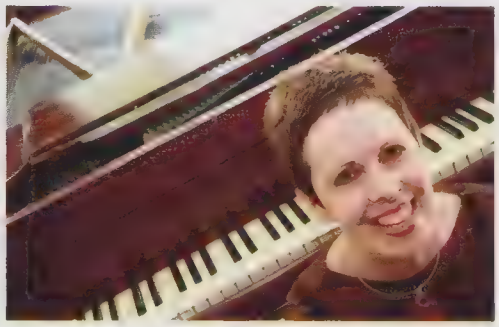
CONDITIONS
The right is reserved to add, withdraw, reschedule or substitute artists/teachers and/or vary advertised programs, prices, venues, seating arrangements and audience capacity. Ticket holders must comply with the security arrangements for the event and venue.

CANCELLATIONS
Three full working days (Mon-Fri) notice is required to qualify for a refund. All refunds attract an administration charge of 25% of the ticket prices with a minimum charge of $5. Not negotiable.

Amongst the exciting performers in the Society's *Resonate* series for 2010 are, clockwise from left, singers Sally Anne Russell, José Carbo and Rosario La Spina, and pianists Andrea Katz and Tatiana Koslesova.

RESONATE 2010

A year of music in the Gallery



Now in its eleventh year, *Resonate* in 2010 once again has an impressive line-up of home-grown and overseas talent.

The series makes a robust start with the magnificent baritone and tenor voices of José Carbo and Rosario La Spina, two of the current crop of Opera Australia's lauded principal singers. They will perform a mixed program of solos and duets including audience favourites such as *Nessun Dorma, Granada* and that glorious showstopper from *The Pearlfishers, In the Depths of the Temple.*

This year *Resonate* presents three evenings of exhilarating music for the piano. In April one of Australia's finest pianists, Stephanie McCallum, performs works by three of the greats – Schumann, Beethoven and Liszt – along with works by Australian composers Roger Smalley and David Lumsdaine.

The second pianist, in June, is Ukranian born Alexander Gavrylyuk, who – as *Resonate* audiences were reminded in the previous issue of *Look* – performed for us in 2006 on his 21st birthday, when he was presented with a cake and the audience sang "happy birthday"! Alexander has gone on to build an international career, recently being invited to perform with the New York and Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestras. He will play a delightful program that includes Beethoven's *Pathetique* Sonata, and Horowitz's transcription *Carmen Variations.*

And in August, winner of the second prize in the 2008 Sydney International Piano Competition, Russian Tatiana Koslesova, returns to Australia and *Resonate.* So popular a performer is Tatiana that she has had many requests to return and we are fortunate to be able to host a concert by her on this tour. Tatiana will perform the sublime *Ballades* of Chopin and the *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales* by Ravel.

In May, distinguished Australian mezzo-soprano Sally Anne Russell returns to *Resonate* with pianist Andrea Katz, in a program of songs by Haydn, Brahms, Duparc and Kurt Weill.

July sees the quartet of violin, clarinet, cello and harpsichord of the *Sydney Consort* performing a program of music by Scarlatti, Gaspar Sanz and Argentine tango master Astor Piazzolla, a truly fascinating blend of music and instrumentation.

Resonate is proud to support young and upcoming musicians, and in September we are thrilled to have South Australian percussionist Nick Parnell perform at the Gallery for the first time. Nick will play a program entitled *Bach to Brazil*, which includes popular classics by Bach, Gershwin and Satie and the *Brazilian Rhapsody*, played with virtuosic skill on a range of percussion instruments.

The year will end on a high note, with the return of the *Sydney Omega Ensemble* playing Mozart's beautiful Serenade No. 10 in B flat major, the *Gran Partita*, and Dvorak's *Wind Serenade in D Minor.*

With the wonderful support of the Trust Foundation and pianos generously supplied by Theme and Variations Piano Services, the 2010 *Resonate* concert series will once again fill the Gallery's Old Courts with the world's most beautiful music.

CRAIG BRUSH
Executive director, Art Gallery Society

For details, see the 2010 Resonate brochure with this issue.

Resonate proudly supported by

trust

MEMBERS *events*

FEBRUARY 10

Art and Australia lecture series: Mercator's planisphere, 1587 | *A history of the AGNSW*: Horbury Hunt designed the first building on the present Art Gallery site in 1884. In this photo from the AGNSW Research Library and Archive, it can be seen nestled behind Vernon's grander sandstone building. Hunt's 'art barn' was demolished in 1969 to make way for Andrew Anderson's Captain Cook Memorial Wing – see photo on page 29.

3 WEDNESDAY / 4 THURSDAY
LECTURE SERIES
Art and Australia

February 3 & 4
Edmund Capon: *Visions of Terra Australis in the European Imagination*
February 10 & 11
Howard Morphy: *Appreciating the art of Narritjin Maymuru*
February 17 & 18
Robert Clancy: *Beyond Capricorn: map making and European expansion*
February 24 & 25
Christopher Allen: *The Great South Land in the Age of Enlightenment*

THURSDAYS SOLD OUT
6PM-7PM WEDNESDAYS
SINGLE LECTURES $25 MEMBERS
$35 NON-MEMBERS
FULL TERM $220 MEMBERS
$310 NON-MEMBERS
FULL SERIES $530 MEMBERS
$740 NON-MEMBERS
Series proudly sponsored by
RESIMAC

6 SATURDAY / 7 SUNDAY
WORKSHOPS
Society Kids 2010

A monthly program designed for members' children aged strictly five to eight years. The workshops aim to familiarise the children with the Gallery, its collection and basic art skills. Children will be inspired to create their own artworks. Run on the first weekend of every month, with four sessions available Saturdays and Sundays. Please call 9225 1878 for availability.

10.30AM-12 NOON AND 1.30PM-3PM

6 SATURDAY / 7 SUNDAY
ART CLUB
Ink and Pencil

You will visit the Asian Gallery this month to look at examples of Asian scrolls and discover how they use the space to take us on a journey. Taking sketches made in the gallery as the starting point, you create your own paper scroll incorporating the concept of negative space. Please call 9225 1878 for availability or check our website.

SINGLE SESSIONS $25

9 TUESDAY
COFFEE MORNING
Rupert Bunny

This is your final opportunity for a coffee morning tour of the beautiful *Rupert Bunny* retrospective. After coffee in the members lounge, join the Volunteer Guides for a tour of the exhibition.

10AM COFFEE, 10.30AM TOUR
$15 MEMBERS & GUESTS

12 FRIDAY
WORKSHOP
Absolute Beginners - Pencil

In this monthly class artist Brenda Tye introduces a range of artistic techniques. Learn the fundamentals of making art with pencils. No experience needed.

1PM-4PM MEET IN MEMBERS LOUNGE
$45 MEMBERS $50 NON-MEMBERS

13 SATURDAY
WORKSHOP
Teenage Art Workshop - Charcoal

Many artists, such as Degas and Gauguin favoured the use of charcoal for its intense richness. Further your skills by using charcoal to create detailed tonal studies or large expressive works with rich blacks and subtle tonal values.

1PM-4PM MEET IN MEMBERS LOUNGE
$30 MEMBERS $40 NON-MEMBERS

13 SATURDAY
SYMPOSIUM
Art of Utamaro

Read about Kitagawa Utamaro in our cover story and come to the symposium. For more information see the Gallery website http://artgallery.nsw.gov.au/events/cal/utamaro_symposium.

Price includes exhibition entry, morning tea and lunch.

9.30AM-4PM DOMAIN THEATRE
$80 MEMBERS $90 NON-MEMBERS
$60 CONCESSION

14 SUNDAY
WORKSHOP
CONTEMPO
Mixed Media

Classes in mixed media/collage will introduce the history of collage through artists such as Picasso and Schwitters. Each workshop will focus on a different aspect of collage, beginning with composition and techniques in abstraction. All materials, light lunch and exhibition entry (where appropriate) are included. Supported by Eckersley's.

10AM-3PM
MEET RESTAURANT FUNCTION SPACE
$75 MEMBERS $90 NON-MEMBERS

14 SUNDAY / 15 MONDAY
FREE VIEWINGS
Hymn to Beauty: The Art of Utamaro

The members' weekend free viewing of the *Hymn to Beauty: The Art of Utamaro* exhibition will be held on Sunday from 5.15pm to 7.30pm. The members' weekday free viewing will be held on Monday from 10am to 12.30pm. Entry is by current membership card.

17 WEDNESDAY / 24 WEDNESDAY
TOURING NEW ART
Twilight Gallery Express

Join our delightful summer evening tours of selected Sydney commercial galleries. A glass of champagne and refreshments are included. The final tour is on Wednesday February 24.

6.30PM-9PM
MEET ON FRONT STEPS, AGNSW
$48 MEMBERS AND GUESTS

20 SATURDAY
WORKSHOP
Printmaking workshop

Master printmaker and lecturer Andrew Totman will guide the class through *Hymn to Beauty: the Art of Utamaro*. Then the class will create three plate reduction block prints with the addition of mono prints and Chine Colle. Each participant will need to have an apron and source material for the prints (photos or drawings).

10.15AM-4.15PM MEET MEMBERS LOUNGE
$110 MEMBERS $120 NON-MEMBERS

20 SATURDAY
SPECIAL EVENT
CONTEMPO
Art Quest

Join Contempo for a quest with a twist. Follow a trail of cryptic clues and questions through six galleries, uncovering hidden answers in paintings you may never have noticed. Whether you love a quest or just want to explore the art, this will be fun for everyone. Refreshments included.

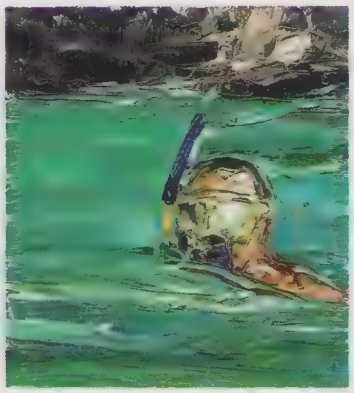
12PM-4.30PM MEET AT RESTAURANT FUNCTION SPACE
$45 MEMBERS $55 NON-MEMBERS
$40PP FOR A TEAM OF SIX

20 SATURDAY
DAY TOUR
Masterpieces from Paris: Van Gogh, Gauguin, Cézanne and Beyond

Phone 02 225 1878 to check availability for our third tour to this NGA exhibition in Canberra.

20 SATURDAY
ARMCHAIR TRAVEL
Darwin to Broome

Sheona White, senior coordinator of public programs at the Gallery, and tour leader of the Society's Darwin to Broome tour will give an armchair travellers' guide to the extraordinary landscapes, history and culture of the Top End as she takes you on a preview of that journey.



Kitagawa Utamaro *'The style of a feudal lord's household'*, from the series *Guide to contemporary style* c.1800–01. Ōban, colour woodblock print with white mica. Asian Art Museum, National Museums in Berlin. Photography: Jürgen Liepe | Archibald party: 2009 winner **Guy Maestri** *Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu*. Oil on linen 200 x 168 cm. © the artist | An evening with Nicholas Harding: **Nicholas Harding** *In the swell (snorkeller)* 2006. Oil on Belgian linen 56 x 51 cm. © the artist | Contempo bookclub: photo by Lisa Thornberg.

10AM COFFEE YIRIBANA FOYER, 10.30-11.30AM TALK, CENTENARY AUDITORIUM
$15 MEMBERS & GUESTS

21 SUNDAY
WORKSHOP
CONTEMP
Experiments in Sculpture

Sculptor Margo Gabsi will demonstrate the use of wire, found objects, fabric stiffener, modroc and simple armatures. Examining the works of Giacometti and Germaine Richier, participants will produce one or more resolved works that are small scale, figurative and utilising a variety of materials. This workshop is intended for beginners and includes all materials and a light lunch. Please wear closed-in shoes.

10.30AM-4.30PM MEET AT RESTAURANT FUNCTION SPACE
$95 MEMBERS $110 NON-MEMBERS

23 TUESDAY
EXHIBITION VIEWING
An Evening with Nicholas Harding

An exclusive evening for members to hear one of Australia's most highly regarded artists in discussion with Simon Marnie from 702 ABC Radio at the National Trust S.H. Ervin Gallery when it is closed to the public. Nicholas will share his thoughts on *Drawn to paint*, a survey of his artistic practice from 1984 to 2009. Refreshments provided.

6.30PM-8.30PM
S.H. ERVIN GALLERY, WATSON RD, OBSERVATORY HILL, THE ROCKS
$35 MEMBERS $45 NON-MEMBERS

24 WEDNESDAY
TOUR
CONTEMP
Contempo Art Tour

Love contemporary art, but want to know what it all means? Join our Guides for an informative tour of the Gallery's contemporary collection, especially designed for Contempo. We encourage you to bring your friends. After the tour, join Contempo for a glass of wine in the members lounge.

7.15PM-8.15PM TOUR
MEET AT MEMBERS LOUNGE
8.15PM DRINKS FREE ADMISSION

26 FRIDAY
COFFEE LECTURE
A History of the AGNSW

Although now situated in the leafy Domain on the edge of the city, the Art Gallery of New South Wales was originally meant to be somewhere else. Founded in the 1870s, at a time when the colony was attempting to lift itself above mere "mercantile and bucolic pursuits" (as the London press wrote), its growth has mirrored that of the city. Gallery archivist Steven Miller will trace some of the fascinating history of this iconic institution.

10AM COFFEE, 10.30AM TALK
CENTENARY AUDITORIUM
$15 MEMBERS & GUESTS

26 FRIDAY
WORKSHOP
Skills and Mediums - Drawing and Collage

This series is designed for those wanting to further their art interest through a range of practical skills in different mediums. Take advantage of Brenda Tye's expertise as she guides students in experimenting with drawing and collage techniques. Includes a light lunch; all materials provided. Bring an apron.

10.30AM-3.30PM
MEET IN MEMBERS LOUNGE
$75 MEMBERS $85 NON-MEMBERS

26 FRIDAY TO 28 SUNDAY
ART WORKSHOP
Pure Abstract

Peter Griffin has new workshops for 2010. Students initially meet Peter at the AGNSW for a short inspirational tour, followed by two days with Peter and his wife in their studio in Leichhardt, with unlimited amounts of paint, paper and brushes provided. The "pure abstract" workshop is designed to give participants the experience of creating with no particular reference apart from the painting itself. Bring an apron. Suitable for beginners and experienced students. A delicious morning tea and lunch are provided. Address supplied with tickets.

FRIDAY 11AM MEET MEMBERS LOUNGE
SATURDAY/SUNDAY 9.30AM-4.30PM
$295 MEMBERS $305 NON-MEMBERS

27 SATURDAY
WORKSHOP
CONTEMP
Drawing the Figure I

Students learn the fundamental drawing skills. Working from a nude model, the focus is on short poses.

10AM-12PM MEET MEMBERS LOUNGE
$30 MEMBERS $40 NON-MEMBERS

Drawing the Figure II

Students gain a better understanding of the figure through longer studies with guidance and encouragement in the use of different mediums. All materials kindly provided by Eckersley's Art & Craft.

1PM-4PM MEET MEMBERS LOUNGE
$40 MEMBERS $50 NON-MEMBERS

28 SUNDAY
BOOK CLUB
CONTEMP
Contempo Book Club

Would you like to learn more about contemporary art, read more books and meet new people? If yes, then 2010 is the year to join the Contempo Book Club! The bi-monthly book club will catch up on Sunday afternoons in the members lounge to discuss the month's contemporary art book and enjoy some tea and scones. This month's book is *Seven Days in the Art World* by Sarah Thornton. Ask at the Gallery Shop for your special discount. For more information on this series see Contempo.org.au.

2PM-4PM
$20 MEMBERS $25 NON-MEMBERS
SERIES $100 MEMBERS
$135 NON-MEMBERS
BOOK LIST PROVIDED WITH TICKETS

MARCH

3 WEDNESDAY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
CONTEMP

Come and hear the year in review at the Contempo AGM and then enjoy a tour of the gallery's contemporary collection. For anyone interested in nominating themselves to be on the committee, this is your chance. This is a free night, but capacity is limited so please call 9225 1878 to book your place.

6PM CENTENARY AUDITORIUM, FREE
FOLLOWED BY TOUR AND DRINKS

23 TUESDAY
MEMBERS' PREVIEW
Archibald Party

It may be a day or two earlier this year, but it's Archibald party time for Society members! See if you can pick the winner in our Archibald Sweepstake, view the Wynne and Sulman Prizes before the winners are selected and the exhibitions are open to the public. There'll be lots of great food, drink and toe-tapping music to get you up dancing, so get in early to secure your tickets.

6.30PM-9.30PM AGNSW
$75 MEMBERS, $85 NON-MEMBERS

31 WEDNESDAY
ART GALLERY SOCIETY AGM

The 54th Annual General Meeting of the Art Gallery Society of NSW will be held in the Centenary Auditorium, Art Gallery of NSW, Art Gallery Road, Sydney on Wednesday March 31 at 7.15pm. Phone 9225 1878 for catering purposes.

WHAT'S *on*

THE ART MARKET AND VIEWINGS

COMMERCIAL AND REGIONAL GALLERIES

Artarmon Galleries
479 Pacific Highway Artarmon 2064
Tel 02 9427 0322
www.artarmongalleries.com.au
1–26 February:
Group exhibition including works by
CLEM MILLWARD, GLEN PREECE
and **LANCE SOLOMON**
Mon-Fri only 10am-5pm

Art Equity Gallery
Level 6/16-20 Barrack Street Sydney 2000
Tel 02 9262 6660 Fax 02 9262 6665
info@artequity.com.au
www.artequity.com.au
Art Equity Gallery is Sydney's leading CBD based contemporary art space with a dynamic changing exhibition programme
4–19 February:
Punkilpirri and Beyond
NYURAPAYIA NAMPITJINPA (MRS.BENNETT), TJAWINA PORTER NAMPITJINPA and **ESTHER GILES NAMPITJINPA**
25 February – 12 March:
New Works – **MORTEN LASSEN**
Mon-Fri 9am-5pm or by appointment

Australian Galleries see p3

Australian Museum see p21

The Australian Watercolour Institute see p5

Bathurst Regional Art Gallery see p33

Beowulf Galleries & Bonsai Exotique
23 Queen Street Woollahra 2025
Tel 02 9362 5583
www.beowulfgalleries.com.au
Contemporary Art & ***Bonsai*** for sale
Wed-Sun 10am-5pm

Charles Hewitt Gallery see p20

Christopher Day Gallery
CELEBRATING 30 YEARS
cnr Elizabeth & Windsor Sts Paddington 2021
Tel 02 9326 1952 Mobile 0418 403 928
www.cdaygallery.com.au
Tues-Sat 11am-6pm or by appointment

Cockatoo Island
Until 26 March:
I am not me, the horse is not mine
by **WILLIAM KENTRIDGE** (South Africa)
From the Collection of the Anita & Luca Belgiorno-Nettis Foundation.
This installation, which premiered at the 16th Biennale of Sydney 2008, is on display in its original location on Cockatoo Island. Ferries available from Circular Quay Thursday to Sunday 10am-4pm

The Corporate Vault see p2

Delmar Gallery see p35

deutscher and hackett see p4

Eva Breuer Art Dealer
83 Moncur Street Woollahra 2025
Tel 02 9362 0297
www.evabreuerartdealer.com.au
Gallery 1 and **Gallery 2**
February: ***Summer Exhibition 2010***
featuring important Australian paintings by artists including **BOYD, COBURN, CROOKE, GLEESON, KRUGER, NOLAN, SHEAD, STORRIER, WHITELEY** and more
Tues-Fri 10am-6pm Sat 10am-5pm
Outside of these hours please contact:
Eva Breuer: 0418 899 006 or
Robert Maconachie: 0423 855 707

Frances Keevil Gallery
Bay Village 28-34 Cross Street
Double Bay 2028
Tel 02 9327 2475
www.franceskeevilart.com.au
2–22 February:
Art Sale by Gallery & Exhibiting Artists
Paintings, prints & sculpture
Mon-Fri 10am-5pm Sat 10am-4pm
Sun 11am-4pm

gallery41 – Feyona van Stom
41 Riley Street Woolloomooloo 2011
Tel 0408 226 827 www.gallery41.com.au
3–20 February – Opening 6 February 2-5pm
Woodfired Pottery and
MATTHEW ABLITT's prints & paintings
Wed-Sat 1-6pm and by appointment

Glasshouse Regional Gallery
Cnr Clarence & Hay streets
Port Macquarie 2444
Tel 6581 8888 www.glasshouse.org.au
Experience international and national touring exhibitions in this state-of-the-art gallery

Hogarth Galleries
Aboriginal Art Centre
7 Walker Lane Paddington 2021
Tel 02 9360 6839 Fax 02 9360 7069
www.aboriginalartcentres.com
info@hogarthgalleries.com
3–25 February: ***Muiyiw Minaral***
GEORGE NONA, BILLY MISSI and **GLEN MACKIE**
Tues-Sat 10am-5pm

Horus & Deloris Contemporary Art Space
Level 2, 102 Pyrmont Street Pyrmont 2009
Tel/fax 02 9660 6071
www.horusanddeloris.com.au
caz@horusanddeloris.com.au
Gallery hours: Tues, Wed, Fri 11am-6pm
Thurs 11am-7pm Sat 11am-3pm
Horus & Deloris will re-open on 16 February

Jayes Gallery see p35

Kedumba Gallery
Wentworth Falls
Tel 0418 414 402
www.kedumba.org.au
1 February – 30 April:
Retrospective of 20 years
Kedumba Collection of Contemporary Australian Drawings
Mon-Fri 11am-4pm
Weekend appointments welcome

Lavender Bay Gallery and Royal Art Society Art School
25-27 Walker Street Lavender Bay 2060
Tel 02 9955 5752 www.royalart.com.au
Email: lavender@royalart.com.au
Gallery exhibition viewing hours
Mon-Fri 10am-4pm Sat-Sun 11am-4pm
Sketch Club: Thursdays 7-9am and Fridays 10am-1pm Cost: $10 with model
RAS Art School: 1st Term commences Monday 1 February – Day, evening and weekend classes in portraiture, still life, watercolour, life drawing, general drawing, life painting, pastel, botanical drawing with **BARBARA DUCKWORTH**, sculpture and drawing with **ALAN SOMERVILLE**. Workshops throughout the year.

Maitland Regional Art Gallery (MRAG)
230 High Street Maitland 2320
Tel 02 4934 9859 Fax 02 4933 1657
Email artgallery@maitland.nsw.gov.au
www.mrag.org.au
Open 10am-5pm Tuesday to Sunday
Closed Mondays and Public Holidays

Moss Vale Art Exhibition
DON TALINTYRE Retrospective
My Life in Art
13 February – 13 March:
Opening 12 February 6-8pm
Mon-Sat 10am-4pm
The Shipton Property Group
Clarence House Clarence Street
Moss Vale 2577 Tel 02 4869 5741
Email: shipton@bigpond.net.au

National Art School Gallery
National Art School Forbes Street
Darlinghurst 2010
Tel 02 9339 8745 www.nas.edu.au
25 February – 9 March:
2010 National Art School MFA Graduates 2005-2009
This survey exhibition brings together work by the first twenty graduates of the Master of Fine Art program at the National Art School. The exhibition conveys the breadth of contemporary practice and includes media from ceramics to moving image – recognising the calibre of this group of highly talented National Art School alumni.
Opening hours: Mon-Sat 10am-4pm

National Art School Public Programs
Forbes Street Darlinghurst 2010
Semester 1 short courses start 1 March
Two new ***Artists' Residential Camps***
Bundanon in April & Central Australia in May
Call 02 9339 8745 or www.nas.edu.au

National Portrait Gallery
King Edward Terrace Parkes ACT 2600
Tel 02 6102 7000 Fax 02 6102 7001
www.portrait.gov.au
Until 21 February:
Idle Hours
Until 23 March:
Doppelganger (online exhibition)
22 January – 26 April:
Australian of the Year Inspiring a Nation
Open daily 10am-5pm
Free entry – Disabled access

New England Regional Art Museum
106-114 Kentucky Street Armidale 2350
Tel 02 6772 5255 www.neram.com.au
Home of the Howard Hinton, Chandler Coventry and NERAM collections
Tues-Fri 10am-5pm Sat & Sun 10am-4pm

Niagara Galleries
245 Punt Road Richmond Vic 3121
Tel 03 9429 3666 Fax 03 9428 3571
mail@niagara-galleries.com.au
www.niagara-galleries.com.au
2–27 February: **SONG LING**
Tues 11am-8pm Wed-Sat 11am-6pm

Peter Walker Fine Art
101 Walkerville Terrace Walkerville SA 5081
Tel 08 8344 4607 www.peterwalker.com.au
25 February – 13 March:
Nationally acclaimed **GILES ALEXANDER**
Thurs-Sat 11am-5pm or by appointment

Presbyterian Ladies' College Sydney see p22

Rex Irwin Art Dealer see p18

rex-livingston art dealer see p33

Sculpture on the Edge
5–14 March: Exhibition at Bermagui
Large sculptures: On the spectacular Bermagui Headland looking to Mount Gulaga and at Horseshoe Bay Beach
Small sculptures: Bermagui Community Hall
Exhibitors will include **MICHAEL SNAPE, GEOFF HARVEY, AMANDA STUART, KAREN CHARLEBOIS** and others
7 March: Symposium
Sculpture Controversy !
Contact Jan Ireland 02 6493 3808
www.sculpturebermagui.org.au

Seek Fine Art
Ground Floor 8-16 Soudan Lane
Paddington 2021
Tel 02 9360 2248
Email: info@seekfineart.com.au
www.seekfineart.com.au
12–27 February:
Group Show – **ANDREW BENNETT, DONNA MAREE ROBINSON, LINDA BOWDEN, JOE TABONE** and **CLARK BARRETT**
Wed-Sat 11am-6pm or by appointment

S.H. Ervin Gallery see p48

Stella Downer Fine Art see p19

Tamworth Regional Gallery
466 Peel Street Tamworth 2340
Tel 02 6767 5459
www.tamworthregionalgallery.com.au
Gallery 1: Until 6 March
ZHONGJIAN : ***Midway***
A Wollongong City Gallery Touring Exhibition
Gallery 2: Until 20 February
Guitar Shaped World
An exhibition inspired by the shape of the guitar
Tues-Fri 10am-5pm Sat 10-4pm

Trevor Victor Harvey Gallery
515 Sydney Road Seaforth 2092
Tel 02 9907 0595 Mob 0408 359 199
www.tvhgallery.com.au
12–28 February: **VAYU**
Tues-Sat 11am-6pm Sun 12noon-5pm

Watters Gallery
109 Riley Street East Sydney 2010
Tel 02 9331 2556
www.wattersgallery.com
20 January – 6 February:
JAMADI – Paintings
ANNETTE IGGLEDEN – Paintings
10–27 February:
JOE FROST – Paintings and drawings
PAUL BACON – Sculpture
Tues & Sat 10am-5pm Wed-Fri 10am-7pm

Woollahra Times Art Gallery
2 Moncur Street Woollahra 2025
Tel 02 9363 5616
Email: timesart@bigpond.com
www.timesart.com.au
Works by **OLSEN, TUCKER, BOYD, GLEESON, DICKERSON, CROOKE, JOHNSON, LARWILL, FRENCH, STORRIER** and many others
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GALLERY *diary*

FEBRUARY 10

EVENTS FOR MEMBERS PRINTED IN COLOUR

3 WED

2PM & 7.15PM
Rupert Bunny film
Moulin Rouge

5.30PM
Six photographers talk – Elizabeth Maloney

6PM
Art and Australia lecture – Edmund Capon

6.30PM
Rupert Bunny celebrity talk – Emma Ayres, ABC Classic FM

4 THU

1PM
Art and Australia lecture – Edmund Capon SOLD OUT

5 FRI

1PM
Rupert Bunny lecture – Craig Judd

6 SAT

7.45AM *Masterpieces from Paris* day tour SOLD OUT

10.30AM & 1.30PM
Society Kids

10.30AM & 1.30PM
Art Club

1.30PM Art Club

1PM
Rupert Bunny painting with words – John Derum

7 SUN

10.30AM & 1.30PM
Society Kids

10.30AM & 1.30PM
Art Club

9 TUE

6PM
Corporate viewing

10 WED

2PM & 7.15PM
Rupert Bunny film
Camille

3PM
Rupert Bunny painting with words – John Derum

5.30PM
Rupert Bunny talk – Catriona Moore

6.30PM
Rupert Bunny celebrity talk – Catherine Martin, Oscar-winning costume designer

11 THU

1PM

12 FRI

1PM
Rupert Bunny lecture – David Briggs

13 SAT

14 SUN

10AM
Contempo Mixed Media

2PM
Rupert Bunny film *Camille*

5.15PM
Utamaro members free viewing

15 MON

10AM
Utamaro members free viewing

17 WED

2PM & 7.15PM
Rupert Bunny film *An American in Paris*

5.30PM
Rupert Bunny talk – Christopher Allen

6PM
Art and Australia lecture

6.30PM
Twilight Gallery Express

6.30PM
Rupert Bunny celebrity talk – Peter FitzSimons, author and SMH writer

18 THU

1PM
Art and Australia lecture SOLD OUT

20 SAT

7.45AM *Masterpieces from Paris* day tour

10AM
Armchair Travel Darwin to Broome

10.15AM
Printmaking workshop

12PM
Contempo Art Quest

1PM
An afternoon with the Ballets Russes

21 SUN

10.30AM
Contempo Experiments in Sculpture

2PM
Rupert Bunny film *An American in Paris*

2.30PM
Chinese New Year Performance

23 TUE

6.30PM
An Evening with Nicholas Harding

24 WED

5.30PM
Artexpress 2010 talk – Leeanne Carr

Moulin Rouge (still) courtesy Park Circus. | Twilight at Broome, Western Australia. Photo by Linda & Colin McKie. | *An American in Paris* (still) courtesy Chapel Distribution.

6.30PM

6.30PM
Artexpress 2010 celebrity talk – Gretel Killeen

25 THU

26 FRI

27 SAT

28 SUN

9.30AM
Pure Abstract workshop

2PM
Contempo Book Club

WHAT'S ON *elsewhere*

At Plains Gallery, right: **Hanna Kay** *Undercurrent*. Oil on tempera on linen 180 x 350 cm. © the artist. At ACP, below: **Eniac Martínez** *Charco Cercado* from the series *Camino Real de Tierra Adentro* © the artist.

INTERNATIONAL

AUCKLAND
ART GALLERY
Taste: Food and Feasting in Art
Until February 14

PARIS
MUSEE DU LOUVRE
Joseph Kosuth:
Neither Appearance Nor Illusion
Until June 21

LONDON
TATE MODERN
Arshile Gorky: A Retrospective
February 10 to May 3

BERLIN
DEUTSCHE GUGGENHEIM
Utopia Matters:
From Brotherhoods to Bauhaus
Until April 11

SYDNEY

ACP
Camino Real de Tierra Adentro
Eniac Martínez
Until March 6

POWERHOUSE MUSEUM
The 80s are back
Until December 2010

UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY
Mirror Mirror: There and Now
Until May 2

MCA
Almanac: the gift of Ann Lewis AO
Until April 18

MACLEAY MUSEUM
Makarr-garma: Aboriginal Collections from a Yolŋu Perspective
Until May 15

INTERSTATE

DARWIN
MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY OF THE NT
Beautiful Beasts
Until March 14

MELBOURNE
NGV INTERNATIONAL
Chinoiserie
Until March 14

CANBERRA
NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY
Idle Hours
Until February 21

BRISBANE
GALLERY OF MODERN ART
The 6th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art
Until April 5

HOBART
TASMANIAN MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY
Hans Heysen
Until February 21

ADELAIDE
FLINDERS UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM
Colour Country: art from Roper River
Until February 14

PERTH
ART GALLERY OF WA
McCubbin: Last Impressions 1907-17
Until March 29

REGIONAL

WESTERN PLAINS CULTURAL CENTRE
Latent: Lara Scolari
Until March 14

NEWCASTLE REGION ART GALLERY
Varanasi: Recent paintings of India
February 13 to April 18

TWEED RIVER ART GALLERY
Sidney Nolan: the Gallipoli series
Until March 14

MOREE PLAINS GALLERY
Hanna Kay
Until March 7

GUIDED TOURS

Highlights of the Collection
Daily 11am (except Mon), 1pm, 2pm

Yiribana (Aboriginal collection)
Daily 1pm

Arts of Asia
Daily at noon

Contemporary collection (including Kaldor Projects to Feb 14)
Wed, Fri, Sun at noon,
Wed Feb 3 at 7.15pm

Rupert Bunny: artist in Paris
Daily 11am, 2pm, Wed 7.15pm
(until Feb 21)

40 years: Kaldor Public Art Projects
Mon, Tue, Thurs at noon (until Feb 14)

Hymn to beauty: the art of Utamaro
Daily 1pm, Wed 7.15pm
(starting Feb 15)

Kitagawa Utamaro *Okita of the teahouse Naniwayac.* 1793. Ōban, colour woodblock print with white mica ground. Asian Art Museum, National Museums in Berlin. Photography: Jürgen Liepe

SPECIAL TOURS

Community Ambassadors
Cantonese language: Tue 11am
Mandarin language: Thur 11am
Japanese language: Fri 11am
(Japanese language tour of *Utamaro* Wed Feb 24 11am)

Signing Art: Auslan interpreted tours
Sunday February 28 at 1.30pm

GALLERY HOURS

Thur-Tue 10am-5pm
Wed (Art After Hours) 10am-9pm
Telephone 02 9225 1700
Website www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au

AGNSW
exhibitions

AGNSW CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

Contemporary Collection
Until February 14, lower level 2, free

Adam Cullen *Comedic Relief* (detail) 2000. Synthetic polymer paint on canvas. Contemporary Collection Benefactors 2008. AGNSW collection. © the artist.

40 years: Kaldor Public Art Projects
Until February 14, lower level 2, free

Gilbert & George *The Singing Sculpture* performed at AGNSW between 16-21 August 1973. © Gilbert & George. Courtesy Kaldor Public Art Projects.

Tatzu Nishi: War and peace and in between
Until February 14, in front of the Gallery, free

Tatzu Nishi *War and peace and in between* (detail) 2009. A Kaldor Public Art Project at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney. © the artist.

Rupert Bunny
Until February 21, lower level 1
$10 member $15 non-member $40 family

Rupert Bunny *A summer morning* c.1897 (detail). Oil on canvas 97.9 x 129.5 cm. Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide.

6 photographers
Until February 21
Australian collection focus room, ground level, free

6 photographers graphic design by Gordon Andrews 1955. Catalogue cover 12.7 x 12.7cm. © Estate of Gordon Andrews. Collection of Art Gallery of NSW Research Library and Archive.

Hymn to beauty: the art of Utamaro
February 13 to May 2, Asian gallery, ground level, $5 members $8 non-members $20 family

Kitagawa Utamaro *Yamauba and Kintarô: spinning spool* 1796–99 (detail). Ôban, colour woodblock print. Asian Art Museum, National Museums in Berlin. Photography: Jürgen Liepe.

Artexpress 2010
February 18 to May 9, project gallery, ground level, free

Laura Stortenbeker *person/prison* 2009 (detail). Collection of works. Merewether High School. © the artist.

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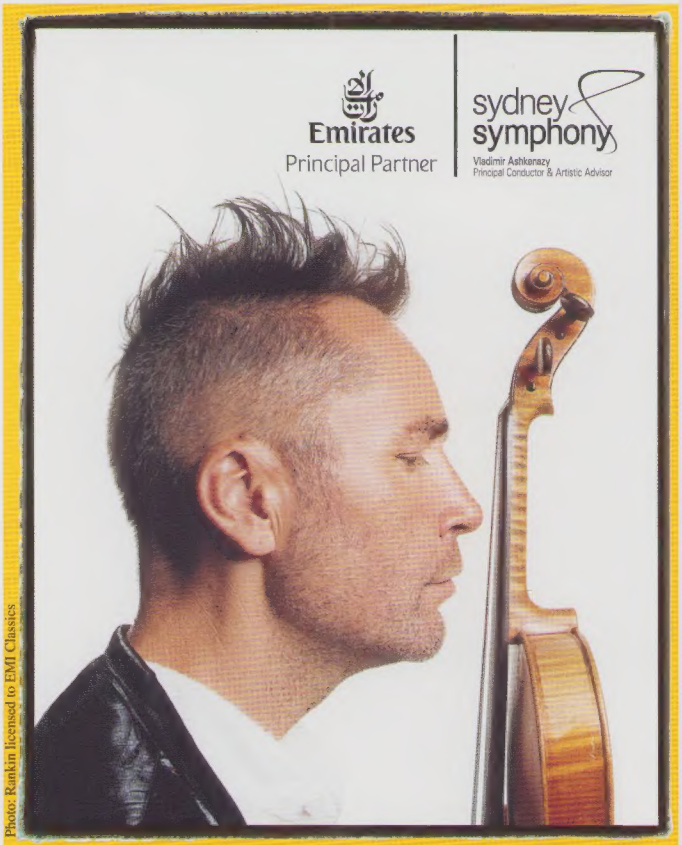

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LAST *word*

A passion for art and education – introducing Victoria Collings

Over the years, the Gallery has developed an extensive and highly successful range of educational initiatives for students and teachers, from kindergarten to tertiary education. This month, *Look* welcomes the newly appointed AGNSW senior coordinator of education programs, Victoria Collings MA, BA (Hons), PGCE, Nat Dip. She replaces Tristan Sharp, who moved on at the end of last year to become program manager at Newcastle Region Art Gallery. Victoria, however, is not new to the Gallery or education programs, having been involved with the AGNSW public programs department for nearly a decade.

Born in Derbyshire, England, Victoria worked as an art teacher for several years and volunteered for a number of museum programs in the UK. She is motivated by a life-long passion for art: "My parents very much encouraged that, taking me to galleries and museums from a very young age. My mother does beautiful fabric designs and embroideries, and my dad loves history and museums." Now she is fostering that passion in her own children: "My son Matthew is five, but can tell what paintings have been moved when I bring him in, and Rachel, who is only five months, has already been to the Gallery about 20 times!"

After meeting her Melbourne-born husband Iain, a research scientist for CSIRO, Victoria moved to Australia in 2000. Within a year, her association with the Gallery had begun: "I came in as a public programs intern in 2001, while studying for my masters in museum studies at the University of Sydney. I had a chance to extend my internship and work on the education program for the 2002 *Buddha* exhibition. Not long after that, Art after Hours was launched at the Gallery and I became involved with that too. In 2004, I was employed as K-6 and family programs co-ordinator."

That year, Victoria started the Gallery Tour for Tots program – an idea prompted by her parenting experience: "At the time I was keen to find some art-related activities I could do with Matthew and was inspired by seeing how much he enjoyed coming to the Gallery." Her teaching background came in useful too, as she devised the Gallery's program of staff development days for teachers: "These give teachers the opportunity to learn about key temporary exhibitions and develop classroom techniques. We've had a great response."

Victoria is eager to sink her teeth into her new role next month, and to collaborate with her colleagues: "It is such an incredible team of professionals, really passionate about what they do. I look forward to hearing their ideas about the future of public programs." Though when it comes to ideas for the department, Victoria is hardly at a loss: "I'd like to see the Gallery become a centre of excellence for teacher training, with more and more teachers taking advantage of this resource.

"The kids audio tours that were launched last year have been a fantastic success. I would like to marry this with our school programs and create guides for teachers. I would also like the department to produce more web-based activities, to reach all schools across the state. Our education kits now include PowerPoint presentations that teachers can download as a resource – perhaps we could also integrate interactive whiteboards in the future, I think that would work really well as an analytical tool for artworks ..."

Looks like an art educator's job is never done. Congratulations Victoria and good luck.

LAURA PIA

Photo by Ashlie Hunter.

Vincent van Gogh

Paul Gauguin

Paul Cézanne

Georges Seurat

Pierre Bonnard

Emile Bernard

Claude Monet

Maurice Denis

Edouard Vuillard

Vincent van Gogh Van Gogh's bedroom at Arles 1889, Musée d'Orsay, Paris, © RMN (Musée d'Orsay) / Hervé Lewandowski

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Nicholas Harding - Drawn to paint

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Above- Nicholas Harding Magnolia (Carillion Avenue) 2008 oil on linen